

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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AP photos
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY
SIEGFRIED BRUNER
Stars and Stripes

Peter Struck,
German defense
minister

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Same-sex marriage support: Mass. Attorney General Thomas Reilly, who played a key role in state efforts to fight the legalization of gay marriage a year ago, now says he favors same-sex marriage and will oppose any efforts to ban it.

Reilly, an unannounced Democratic candidate for governor, told The Boston Globe he was "moved" by the same-sex marriages that took place after gay marriage was legalized on May 17.

Reilly said he would vote against a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage if it reached the 2006 state ballot.

Fla. right-to-die battle: A judge in a contentious right-to-die battle has refused to reconsider his ruling allowing a man to remove the feeding tube keeping his brain-damaged wife alive.

Circuit Court Judge George Greer rejected arguments by Terri Schiavo's parents that their daughter's due process rights were violated because she never had her own attorney.

Friday's decision could pave the way for the tube to be removed in the coming weeks. A stay preventing the removal is to be lifted Feb. 22, according to Michael Schiavo's lawyer.

Church sex abuse scandal: Four priests accused of sexually abusing children have been defrocked by the Vatican, the Boston Archdiocese said.

Robert D. Pay, Kelvin Iguabita, Bernard Lane and Robert Ward "no longer in the clerical state," meaning they can no longer function as priests and will no longer receive any financial support from the Boston Archdiocese, the archdiocese announced Friday.

Accused priest's trial: A former altar boy who shot and wounded a defrocked priest testified that he was on the back from the priest led to sexual molestation.

Using explicit language and demonstrating with gestures, Dante Stokes, 29, testified Friday that he was "in disbelief" and "disgusted" when Maurice Blackwell began sexually abusing him in 1989.

Blackwell is charged with four counts of child sex abuse. Stokes served home detention for accusing him on a city street in 2002 and shooting him.

Jimmy Hoffa investigation: The FBI said Friday it had completed a DNA analysis of evidence that could help solve the 30-year-old mystery of the disappearance of Teamsters leader Jimmy Hoffa and submitted a report to Detroit police.

But Bloomfield Township police and Oakland County prosecutors, who are investigating the case, said they were not even aware the analysis was finished. The FBI would not release details of the analysis.

Hoffa last was seen on July 30, 1975, at a restaurant in Bloomfield Township.

McDonald's settlement: McDonald's Corp. will pay \$8.5 million to settle a lawsuit accusing the fast-food giant of failing to inform consumers of delays in a plan to reduce fat in the cooking oil and said the switch would release fries and other foods.

BanTransFats.com, a nonprofit advocacy group, sued McDonald's in California in 2003, alleging the company did not effectively disclose to the public that it had not switched to a healthier cooking oil. In September 2002, McDonald's announced it would lower trans fat in its cooking oils and said the switch would be completed in five months. In February 2003, McDonald's announced the delay. The suit accused the company of failing to adequately inform consumers of that delay.

Monster murder plot: Three members of the Bonanno crime family, including the founding boss, are being held in connection with another monster in New York on Friday,



Marines killed in Iraq: Military gear from Capt. Lyle Gordon, Capt. Paul Alaniz, Staff Sgt. Dexter Kimble and Lance Cpl. Tony Hernandez are placed inside Airman Memorial Chapel during the memorial services for the men at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in California, Friday. The Marines were killed along with 27 others in a helicopter crash in Iraq, Jan. 26.

in the wake of family head Joseph Massimo's deal with the government.

Former acting boss Anthony "Tony Green" Urso, 68, pleaded guilty to racketeering murder, gambling, loan-sharking and extortion. Joseph Cammarano, 69, and Louis Restivo, 70, pleaded to racketeering murder.

Urso could face life in prison at his sentencing. Cammarano and Restivo could face 15 and 10 years behind bars, respectively.

CIA leak probe: Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has stepped aside from the Justice Department investigation into the leak of an undercover CIA officer's identity.

Gonzales had been involved in the case as White House legal counsel, testifying before a federal grand jury and giving advice about it to White House personnel.

He recused himself from the matter shortly after he was sworn in as attorney general last week, Justice Department spokeswoman Tasia Scolinos said Friday.

Space shuttle repair: Astronauts on the first space shuttle flight since the Columbia tragedy will practice three methods for patching holes in orbit and have another two repair kits on hand in case their ship is actually damaged by launch debris this spring.

In announcing the decision Friday, NASA said some of the hole-punching techniques would almost certainly be tested on the second post-Columbia mission as well, later in the year.

On Thursday, the seven astronauts who will take off aboard Discovery as early as mid-May said they still were waiting to hear which repair techniques they would fly.

Top NASA officials will make a final ruling on the matter this Friday.

World

European constitution proposal: French President Jacques Chirac said Friday that the proposed European constitution would greatly bolster the bloc's foreign policy and allow it to avert serious divisions like those suffered over the Iraq war.

"I don't think we will face a crisis like that caused by the Iraq war since we have the constitution up and running," he told a meeting he attended with Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero in Barcelona to promote the new charter.

Chirac was invited to Barcelona by Zapatero to help persuade Spaniards to vote "yes" to the constitution in a referendum on Feb. 20.

Palestinian deportees to return: Israel has agreed to repatriate dozens of Palestinians it expelled from the West Bank during the Palestinian uprising, an adviser to

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Saturday, disclosing the latest measure building on this week's cease-fire.

Israel deported about 55 Palestinians it accused of terror activities to the Gaza Strip and Europe after the uprising started in September 2000. The majority were exiled after a monthlong siege of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem in 2002.

Pope's health: Pope John Paul II is doing well after leaving the hospital and should be able to continue his work schedule within a few days, a top Italian cardinal said in comments published Saturday.

Cardinal Camillo Ruini, the pontiff's vicar for Rome, told the newspaper La Repubblica he was "very optimistic" about John Paul's ability to work following his 10-day hospitalization. The 84-year-old pontiff was rushed to the hospital on Feb. 1 with flu and breathing difficulties.

John Paul returned to the Vatican on Thursday.

Military

Carrier hearing: Testimony by the Navy's top admiral at a Senate committee hearing may aid an effort to save the Florida-based aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy from the scrap heap, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson said Friday.

Adm. Vernon Clark, the Navy's chief of staff, Thursday confirmed the Kennedy, berthed at Mayport Naval Station near Jacksonville, is the previously unidentified carrier earmarked for retirement, said Nelson, D-Fla.

The Defense Department has proposed retiring the ship, which is not nuclear powered, to reduce the Navy's carrier fleet from 12 to 11 to save money.

War on terrorism

Prisoner abuse trial: A CIA contractor charged with beating an Afghan detainee who later died was protecting the nation against terrorists and should not be prosecuted because he was following directives from the president and his administration, his lawyers argued in filings released this week.

Lawyers for David A. Passaro, a former Army Special Forces soldier from North Carolina who was hired as CIA contractor, also contended that the alleged beating of Abdul Wali occurred outside the jurisdiction of U.S. courts.

Passaro was charged in June with four counts of assault, accused of beating Wali with his hands, feet and a flashlight as he tried to get information about rocket attacks on U.S. forces.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

Car bombs kill 16 across Iraq

By ROBERT H. REID

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A car bomb killed 17 people Saturday and injured 21 others in a mostly Shiite Muslim town south of Baghdad, and U.S. troops backed by tanks battled rebels in the country's third largest city as the insurgency showed no sign of abating after national elections.

Another car bomb exploded in an eastern Baghdad neighborhood as a U.S. military convoy passed, killing an Iraqi woman and wounding three others but causing no American casualties, Iraqi police said.

The bomb exploded about a half-mile from a U.S. Army base. The car bomb south of Baghdad exploded near the main hospital in Musayyib, a mostly Shiite town 35 miles south of Baghdad along the Euphrates River. The town is in a religiously mixed area that has been the scene of frequent attacks by Sunni Muslim insurgents.

It appeared the attack was part of a campaign by Sunni Arab extremists against the country's Shiites — an estimated 60 percent of Iraq's 26 million people — who stand on the verge of a major victory as officials finish the final counting from the Jan. 30 national elections.

Partial returns show a Shiite-dominated ticket endorsed by the Shiite clergy leading in the race for the 275 seats in the National Assembly. Shiite religious groups appear to have won control of provincial councils in wide areas of the country, including the two biggest cities, Baghdad and Basra.

Sunni Arab extremists, fearing a loss of their privileged position,

have accused the Americans of manipulating the election to install Shiites and Kurds in power. Sunni Arabs, an estimated 20 percent of the population, form the heart of the insurgency, and many of them boycotted the election.

Fears of sectarian violence prompted the Iraqi government to announce a five-day closing of the nation's borders starting Thursday to protect worshippers during a major Shiite religious holiday, the Feast of Ashura, which climaxes next weekend.

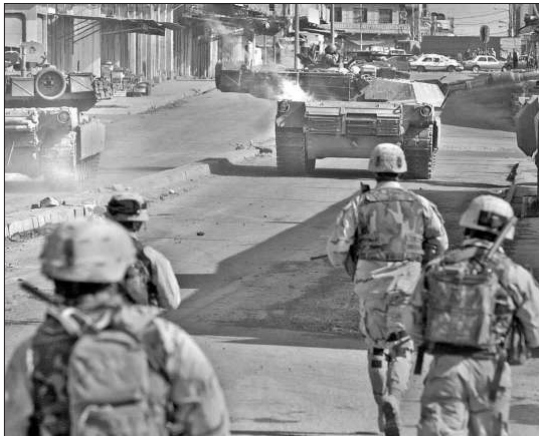
Fierce clashes broke out Saturday in the northern city of Mosul after American troops, responding to a mortar attack on one of their bases, came under small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire from a mosque, U.S. officials said.

The insurgents disabled a U.S. Army tank and a Stryker armored vehicle during the battle, which raged for hours around the mosque, according to Lt. Col. Erik Kurilla. U.S. troops killed nine insurgents but suffered no fatalities, Kurilla said.

A woman died when a mortar round hit her house during the fighting, and another person was killed when a bomb exploded in another part of Mosul, hospital officials said.

Earlier Saturday, police in Mosul discovered the bodies of 12 men — six dressed in Iraqi National Guard uniforms and the others Kurdish security guards — dumped in two areas of the city.

Notes left near the bodies of the Iraqi guards said, "This is the destiny for those who participated in besieging Fallujah," referring to last November's U.S.-led assault on the insurgent bastion 40 miles west of Baghdad.



U.S. Army soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment run toward a tank that had been struck by two rocket-propelled grenades during a four-hour gunbattle with insurgents in Mosul, Iraq, on Saturday.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, at least 1,455 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,111 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is five higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Thursday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 18; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,317 U.S. military members have died, ac-

cording to AP's count. That includes at least 1,002 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

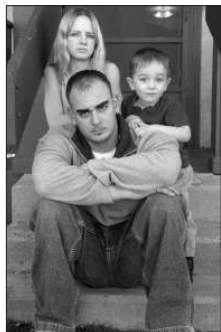
The latest deaths reported by the military: ■ A soldier was killed Friday when an explosive detonated in western Baghdad.

■ A soldier died Thursday after a non-hostile incident in Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Sgt. Jessica M. Housby, 23, Rock Island, Ill., killed Wednesday when an explosive detonated near her convoy in Iraq; assigned to the Army National Guard's 1644th Transportation Company, Rock Falls, Ill.

■ Army Spc. Jeffrey S. Henthorn, 25, Choctaw, Okla., died Tuesday in Balad, Iraq, of non-combat injuries; assigned to the 24th Transportation Company, Fort Riley, Kan.



Former Army Spc. Donald Dills sits outside his Pueblo, Colo., home Feb. 4 with his wife, Eliecia, and 3-year-old son, Robert. Dills says he suffers from depression as a result of the anti-malaria medication Lariam.

Concern mounts over malaria drug

By SETH HETTENA

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — As a volunteer firefighter, Georg-Andreas Pogany had seen disfigured bodies pulled from wrecked cars. But something very different happened when the Army interrogator saw the mangled remains of an Iraqi soldier.

He became panicked, disoriented and that night reached for both his loaded pistol and rifle as he thought he saw the enemy bursting into his room. Pogany asked his superiors for help; the Army packed him home to face charges of cowardice — the first such case since Vietnam.

None of it made sense to Pogany until he learned more about the white pills the Army gave him each week to prevent malaria.

The drug's manufacturer warned of rare but severe side effects including paranoia and hallucinations. It became his defense: The pills made him snap. The Army dropped all charges, a spokesman later saying that Pogany "may have a medical problem that requires care and treatment."

Pogany is among the current or former troops sent to Iraq who claim that Lariam, the commercial name for the anti-malaria drug mefloquine, provoked disturbing and

dangerous behavior. The families of some troops blame the drug for the suicides of their loved ones. Though the evidence is largely anecdotal, their stories have raised alarm in Congress, and the Pentagon has stepped giving out a pill it probably never needed to give to tens of thousands of troops in Iraq in the first place.

The U.S. military, which developed the drug after the Vietnam War, maintains that Lariam is safe and effective, though officials have expressed some concern and the military tells its pilots not to take Lariam.

In written guidance on the drug last year, the military urged commanders to send for a medical evaluation anyone who showed behavioral changes after taking the drug, "especially ... if they carry a weapon" — a description of nearly all U.S. troops in Iraq.

Lariam is among the drugs recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for treatment and prevention of malaria, which kills about 1 million people worldwide each year.

The drug's New Jersey-based manufacturer, Roche Pharmaceuticals, points out that more than 30 million people worldwide have used Lariam over 20 years. "There is no reliable scientific evidence that Lariam is associated with violent acts

or criminal conduct," Roche spokesman Terence Hurley wrote in an e-mailed response to questions.

Further blurring the issue, the side effects associated with Lariam closely mirror symptoms of stress disorders related to combat, making diagnosis difficult.

Still, the pill has dedicated critics who believe it's causing problems that are only beginning to be understood. A review by the Department of Veterans' Affairs found 34 articles in medical journals about patients who took Lariam and became paranoid, psychotic or behaved strangely.

Former Army Spc. Don Dills and his wife say he grew anxious, paranoid and depressed after taking Lariam for seven months in Iraq. Dills, 22, says he "went crazy" on a family visit to Mississippi last year and wound up jailed for robbery. When Dills' wife called her husband's first sergeant about the arrest, he told her: Look into Lariam.

Dills was kicked out of the military shortly after he wound up in a psychiatric ward for problems he and his wife contend are linked to Lariam.

"The bottom line is they know what's going on," said Eliecia Dills, 25, of Pueblo, Colo. "They just don't know how to deal with the can of worms they opened."

G.I. Iraqi army at FOB Wilson making strides

Preparing the soldiers to take over is ticket out of the desert for U.S. troops

BY TERRY BOYD
Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WILSON, Iraq — Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Jackson — and U.S. soldiers like him across Iraq — may be the best hope for soldiers who never want to spend another year in the desert.

Jackson, a 1st Infantry Division scout assigned to 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, has spent the better part of a year training Iraqi army troops at Forward Operating Base Wilson outside Tikrit.

Here, otherwise cynical soldiers are quick to say that while the local police are worthless, the 235 Iraqi army soldiers of Company D, 201st Battalion, are real soldiers and getting better, thanks largely to people such as Jackson.

In a war where no one can even say exactly who the enemy is, the biggest unknown may be when — if ever — Iraqi soldiers will become a fighting force that can take the stress off American soldiers.

On Thursday, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told U.S. troops during a surprise trip to Mosul that they will be able to leave the desert once Iraqi forces are strong enough to maintain security.

However, Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently told Congress that only about one-third of Iraq's 136,000-person security force is capable of fighting insurgents.

Nearly two years after the invasion, the effort to create an effective Iraqi army has yielded inconsistent results. In 2004, Fallujah brigade soldiers refused to fight, then joined insurgents. In Baghdad, 1st Cavalry Division soldiers routinely disarmed Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers last summer, fearing insurgents had infiltrated their ranks.

That's not the case at FOB Wilson, Jackson said, and the only people he has to prove it are to fellow soldiers.

"When they say the IA is doing a good job, they're not blowing smoke ...," he said. "If they weren't, they'd be demanding I get their heads out of their [expletive]."

Jackson predicted Iraqi soldiers could be taking the initiative on raids and patrols in a year, with U.S. soldiers in the background.

Iraqi soldiers are focused and reliable, he said. Over the last year, U.S. soldiers helped them improve marksmanship. The Iraqis have higher morale. They're more disciplined in everything they do.

During a rocket attack on FOB Wilson

on Wednesday, Iraqi soldiers not only spotted the launch, they placed it within 100 meters of the grid pinpointed by base ground radar, Jackson said.

But it took a long time to get to this point. When the 1-4 Cav arrived at FOB Wilson 12 months ago, "we used to have to push the IA to do every little thing," said Sgt. Daniel Veach, a 1-4 Cav squad leader.

He wouldn't even go out the gate with them, Veach said. Now, he patrols regularly with IA troops. "They're 300 times better."

That said, the Iraqi fighters still need work. "When they have contact, it's not uncommon for them to go black on ammo," Jackson said. That is, to empty their AK-47s before they have a clear idea of what or whom they're shooting at.

Local soldiers also have little in the way of a rank structure or chain of command because they're friends with all who live outside FOB Wilson in Mujama or Ad-Dawb.

But they've proved dozens of times they'll fight, soldiers told Stars and Stripes. And they have come a long way, considering how bad relations were early on.

Just after the 1st ID arrived in 2004, Iraqi soldiers got a tip one night and went after — without notifying the Americans — a man suspected of taking potshots at them, Jackson said. A team of Special Forces soldiers and civilian operatives were, by coincidence, observing a neighboring house. In the confusion, the Special Forces team killed five Iraqi soldiers, mistaking them for insurgents. In the aftermath, one-quarter to one-third of the Iraqis quit. A few weeks later, two Iraqi soldiers were kidnapped and executed.

Episodes like that left Jackson feeling he was in the middle of a nightmare job he never wanted.

"I did not want to be here. I wanted to be with my guys," he said. "I keep asking myself, 'Why am I here?'"

Then he realized getting the Iraqi army up and running "is my insurance policy. That I don't have to come back here."

The turning point came when the Army supply chain started producing.

"When we got here, [Iraqi troops] were underequipped, undertrained," Jackson said. Initially, there wasn't much 1-4 Cav soldiers could do except "request, request, request," he said.

Soon, uniforms, weapons and radios started flowing. Then trucks. With the material improvements came improving Iraqi morale and confidence.

"They take pride in the stuff they have,



Jackson



PHOTOS BY TERRY BOYD/Stars and Stripes

Above: Staff Sgt. Clifford Jackson, left, at Forward Operating Base Wilson, Iraq, never wanted to work with Iraqi Army troops. "I wanted to be with my guys," said Jackson, a scout. But helping build the Iraqi forces is his insurance policy, making sure he won't have to come back again, said the 28-year-old soldier. **Below:** Iraqi Army soldiers take a substantial risk joining up, including bombings at recruitment stations. Most soldiers wear masks on missions to keep their identities hidden, making it more difficult for insurgents to retaliate against them and their families.

no matter how limited," Jackson said.

But Iraqi soldiers say they still need greater capabilities. The Iraqi army won't be able to take over from the United States until it is equipped like the Americans, said Staff Sgt. Alaa Akram, one of several 201st soldiers who speak English. The Iraqis won't be able to replace the Americans if they have tanks, aircraft and communications equipment, he said.

Currently, there is "the beginning" of a mechanized infantry brigade, but no plan to give the Iraqi heavy weapons, said Maj. Steve Maranian, Iraqi security forces coordinator at 1st ID headquarters at Camp Dancer in Tikrit.

In January, the New York Times reported that \$300 million in Iraqi government funds is missing, money earmarked for the purchase of weapons for a new Iraqi armored brigade.

Just as important as weapons, Akram added, is that the central government establish "strong law." Right now, the Americans are the law, especially Jackson.

Wednesday, a rioting of an Iraqi officer stormed into Jackson's office, demanding Jackson discipline a soldier who had smashed up a truck. But Jackson is days from returning to the 1-4 Cav headquarters at Schweinfurt, Germany. "What are you going to do when I'm gone? E-mail me!" Jackson asked.

"You're [the executive officer]. You've got a good head on your shoulders. You take care of it."



Some 1-4 Cav troops see the soldiers coming into the Iraqi army now as superior to those who joined when it was called the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. During last October's fighting in Samarra, Veach said he saw elite Iraqi army soldiers that were "at the point that our guys are getting to now."

Ultimately, there is only so much the Americans can do, Akram said. The difference between his men and U.S. soldiers is something far more abstract than weapons or training.

"It's heart," Akram said. He'll know the Iraqi army is ready to take control from the Americans when his fellow soldiers quit joining for a paycheck, he said.

"When we're like the American soldier," Akram said. "He never worries about money. He's worried about his country."

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British soldier denies role in Iraqi prisoner abuse

BY JUERGEN VOGES
The Associated Press

OSNABRUECK, Germany — A British soldier on trial for alleged abuse of detained Iraqis denied in emotional testimony Friday that he made two detainees simulate sexual acts, saying a subordinate who brought the accusation was lying.

Cpl. Daniel Kenyon, the senior defendant, told a court-martial he stopped the abuse as soon as he

saw it and decided not to report it to superiors because other soldiers had also been treating detainees harshly that day in an effort to deter looting, hitting them with sticks.

Kenyon has been accused by Lance Cpl. Gary Bartlam, whose testimony and photos taken in May 2003 at a British-occupied aid warehouse outside Basra underpinned the British military's case against them and two other

soldiers.

Prosecutor Lt. Col. Nick Clapham confronted Kenyon with Bartlam's statement that Kenyon actively took part in making two stripped Iraqi detainees fake oral sex.

"I am telling you, I am a soldier standing here with my uniform and there is no way I was involved in this," replied Kenyon, his voice cracking with emotion.

Bartlam "is not telling the

truth," Kenyon testified in the courtroom at a British base in Germany.

Kenyon bristled when the prosecutor asked him why photos from Iraq seized at his home ended on April 8, 2003, more than a month before the alleged abuse. Clapham suggested the reason was not that Kenyon ran out of film, as he claimed, but that he got rid of incriminating evidence.

"I know what you're suggest-

ing, but it's wrong," Kenyon shot back.

Kenyon has pleaded not guilty to aiding and abetting the abuse of detained looters and failing to report it. On Friday, he reaffirmed earlier testimony that he wasn't involved.

At another point, he came upon a tied-up detainee boasted on the prongs of a forklift being driven by a soldier. Kenyon said he stopped that incident, too, and freed the Iraqi.



A flock of pigeons flies past the Shiite holy shrine of Imam Ali, cousin of the Prophet Mohammed, in Najaf, Iraq, on Monday. Shiites are expected to win the majority of the votes in the recent general election.

Strong election turnout shown by Shiite voters

BY JAMIE TARABAY

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqi officials announced final turnout figures Friday in races for provincial councils in Baghdad and 11 other provinces, confirming strong turnouts among Shiite and Kurdish voters. No figures were released for Sunni areas where the insurgency is most active.

Iraqis voted for provincial councils Jan. 30 along with the 275 seats in the National Assembly, which will approve a new government. Officials said final figures in the assembly contests — both for turnout and for who won — would not be announced for a few more days.

Some Sunni clerics who called for an election boycott agreed to permit their followers to vote in local races, especially in areas with mixed Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish populations.

Election officials said the results were considered final and would be verified within three days pending any disputes. The turnout figures in the assembly races are not expected to be significantly different from those in the provincial contests.

Turnout for the provincial council races in Baghdad — with large Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish populations — was 48 percent, officials said. Low lines were reported on election day in mixed and Shiite areas, but no polling stations opened in the Sunni neighborhood of Azamiyah.

Some 71 percent of registered voters participated in balloting in Babil province, a mixed Shiite-Sunni area south of Baghdad and an insurgency flashpoint.

Turnout by province

Voter turnout figures from Jan. 30 council elections in 12 of Iraq's 18 provinces. Turnout figures for several Sunni provinces were not available Friday:

- Babil: Of 694,192 registered to vote, 494,054 or 71 percent voted.
- Baghdad: Of 3,678,261 registered, 1,750,772 or 48 percent voted.
- Diyala: Of 624,099 registered, 210,574 or 34 percent voted.
- Dhi Qar: Of 429,182 registered, 383,265 or 89 percent voted.
- Karbala: Of 409,081 registered, 297,201 or 73 percent voted.
- Maysan: Of 417,273 registered, 246,957 or 59 percent voted.
- Muthanna: Of 281,987 registered, 173,155 or 61 percent voted.
- Najaf: Of 493,808 registered, 359,288 or 73 percent voted.
- Qadisiyah: Of 486,827 registered, 337,220 or 69 percent voted.
- Sulaimaniyah: Of 914,441 registered, 731,323 or 80 percent voted.
- Dhi Qar: Of 778,574 registered, 522,271 or 67 percent voted.
- Wasit: Of the 494,955 registered, 324,678 or 66 percent voted.

— The Associated Press

The highest turnout was in the Kurdish province of Dohuk, which reported 89 percent. Sulaimaniyah province reported 80 percent participation. Both are part of the Kurdish-run self-governing region, where voters also chose a regional parliament.

Kurdish officials encouraged a heavy turnout in hopes of winning a significant number of National Assembly seats. Partial figures released last week showed the Kurdish ticket running second behind a Shiite list endorsed by the Shiite clergy and ahead of candidates allied with interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi.

The lowest turnout so far, 34 percent, was in Diyala province, a mixed area northeast of Baghdad that has been the scene of recent insurgent attacks. A car bomb Friday at a Shiite mosque in Diyala province killed at least 12 people.

Turnout in the mostly Shiite provinces of Karbala and Najaf,

both home to sacred shrines, was reported at 73 percent.

Shiites, who form about 60 percent of Iraq's estimated 26 million population, turned out in huge numbers to vote, eager to assume leadership after decades of oppression under deposed leader Saddam Hussein.

Many Sunni Arabs, estimated at 20 percent of the population, chose not to vote either out of fear of insurgent attacks or in support of a boycott call by their clergy.

The other turnout figures released were Maysan, 59 percent; Muthanna, 61 percent; Qadisiyah, 69 percent; Dhi Qar, 67 percent; and Wasit, 66 percent.

No final turnout figures were released for such Sunni Arab provinces as Anbar, Salahaddin, Nineveh or the mixed province of Tammim — areas where the insurgents are active. Figures also are pending for Basra, the country's second-biggest city, and Irbil in the Kurdish self-governing region.

Skilled smugglers still slipping past Iraq-Iran border

BY SCHEHEREZADE FARAMARZI

The Associated Press

BASHMAGH, Iraq — Three days a week, Sabriyah Tawfiq walks up the snow-covered mountain near her home and crosses the border into Iran, climbing down the other side to catch a taxi to the nearest town. There, she sells the tea leaves, bars of soap and bottles of shampoo she has smuggled across in a cloth bundle.

Leaving her house at 7 a.m. when weather permits, Tawfiq is usually back home in Iraq by 2 p.m., in time for lunch with her children.

As the White House denies allegations that American spies are crossing into Iran from here to search for nuclear sites, Tawfiq is proof that the border in this rugged northern Kurdish region of Iraq is plenty easy to navigate — for those who know how.

Iraqi guards here say they have increased security at the Iranian border since the war, try to prevent illegal crossings and know nothing about any U.S.-run covert operations into Iraq.

They do acknowledge, though, that relations with Iranian border guards on the other side are poor. And in a trip last week to the region, it was not hard to find both smugglers, and also ordinary Iraqi and Iranian Kurds with relatives on both sides, who cross regularly here without visas, and without passports.

"That is the only thing I know how to do, to bring money to the family," said Tawfiq, a 40-year-old widow whose young son — 10. She wears a headscarf and men's baggy pants tucked into her knee-high rubber boots when she makes the trip over the snow-covered Qochi Sultan Mountain and then on by taxi to the Iranian town of Marivan.

Tawfiq has been caught six times since she became a smuggler two years ago. The security has improved somewhat, she knows from first-hand experience. Before, the Iranian guards accepted bribes when she was caught. Now they confiscate her goods — which she usually sells in Iran for about \$6 — and make her pay a penalty.

Other smugglers carry cigarettes or alcohol, which is forbidden in Iran, or electronic goods and machinery parts. Those coming from Iran bring fruits and vegetables to sell in the Iraqi town of Panjwayn.

According to an article published last month in The New Yorker magazine, U.S. officials have been sending covert reconnaissance missions into Iran from here since last summer to identify possible future military targets inside Iran.

White House officials called the report by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Seymour Hersh inaccurate. Pentagon officials said the article was filled with mistakes and did not deny its basic point.

U.S. military forces based in the Iraqi town of Panjwayn do not cross the Iraq-Iran border in this area about three times a week to check cross-border move-



Iraqi guards patrol on the Iran-Iraq border near Shalamchah, Iraq, on Friday. Iraqi guards have increased security along the border and say relations with Iranian border guards are poor.

ments and make sure there are no infiltrators from Iran, said Lt. Sabir Rashid Saleh, commander of the Iraqi border police in the Bashmagh area.

"We can only tell you what we see with our own eyes," Saleh said. "And we have not seen them cross into Iran. ... If the Americans come to our area, the American commander in charge of this post travels with them on their surveillance. So if they go into Iran, it's not from our post."

Saleh said he had not received instructions from high officials in the Kurdish government to facilitate any covert American crossings into Iraq.

His deputy, Noshirwan Mohammed Amin, said that when the American military comes here, the soldiers focus 75 percent of their time on checking border posts, including buildings and other facilities.

"We don't know what the other 25 percent of their work is," he said.

When American troops first arrived here after the invasion, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, a paramilitary force that controls Iran's border regions, were apprehensive, Saleh said. He and his men went over to reassure the Iranians.

"But they said as long as we were with the Americans, they would refuse to talk to us," he said. "So we and the Iranians have no contact. We don't have good relations."

Only Iranian Kurds are allowed to legally cross into Iraqi Kurdistan at this border point. Border guards say about 50 of them enter Iraq every day. Other Iranian ethnic groups normally must cross from border posts farther south.

CNN's chief resigns over Iraq comment

BY HOWARD KURTZ

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Eason Jordan resigned Friday night as CNN's chief news executive in an effort to quell a bubbling controversy over his remarks about U.S. soldiers killing journalists in Iraq.

Even as he said he had misspoken at an international conference in suggesting that coalition troops had "targeted" a dozen journalists and insisted he never believed that, Jordan was being hammered hourly by bloggers, liberals as well as conservatives, who provided the rocket fuel for a story that otherwise might have fizzled.

Jordan, 44, said in a statement Friday that he was quitting after 23 years at the network "to prevent CNN from being un-

fairly tarnished by the controversy over conflicting accounts of my recent remarks regarding the alarming number of journalists killed in Iraq. ... I never meant to imply U.S. forces acted with ill intent when U.S. forces accidentally killed journalists, and I apologize to anyone who thought I said or believed otherwise."

No definitive account of what Jordan said at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland,

on Jan. 27 has been made public, including the forum's videotape of the off-the-record session. Two congressional Democrats

who were there, Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts and Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, criticized Jordan's remarks. Others in attendance, including U.S. News & World Report editor at large Davidergen and BBC executive Richard Sambrook, said Jordan had corrected his initial remarks.

Jay Rosen, chairman of New York University's journalism department, who has covered the controversy on his PressThink blog, said he didn't think Jordan "had engaged in a firing offense."

Bloggers "made a lot of noise" about the Jordan flap, Rosen said.

"But there was basic reporting going on — finding the people who were there, getting them to make statements, comparing one account to another — along with ac-

counting and conspiracy thinking and the politics of paranoia and attacks on the MSM, or mainstream media."

Several CNN staffers say Jordan, who was distraught about the controversy, saw the handwriting on the wall in tendering his resignation. But top executives are also said to have lost patience with the continuing gossip about Jordan, including his affair with Marianne Pearl, widow of the murdered reporter Daniel Pearl.

In his statement, Jordan said: "I have great admiration and respect for the men and women of the U.S. armed forces, with whom I have worked closely and been embedded in Baghdad, Tikrit, and Mosul" and other places. "As for my colleagues at CNN, I am enormously proud to have worked with you, risking my life in the trenches with you."



Jordan

Survey: Only 4 in 10 know how many U.S. troops killed in Iraq

BY THOMAS HARGROVE
AND GUIDO H. STEMPEL III
Scripps Howard News Service

Most Americans guess wrong when asked to estimate how many troops have died in the U.S. occupation of Iraq, a sign that many are giving scant attention to the nation's most dangerous military operation since the Vietnam War.

A new survey of 1,001 adults conducted by Scripps Howard News Service and Ohio University found that fewer than half said they "very closely"

follow news coverage of the war on terror" or "peace in the Mideast" as the most important issue facing America. Most others preferred domestic concerns like the economy, Social Security, education or health care.

So far this year, soldiers and Marines have died at a rate of about three per day in the conflict. More than 1,450 military personnel and several dozen civilian employees of the Defense Department have died since Operation Iraqi Freedom began nearly two years ago.

Forty percent of people in the poll gave the correct answer when asked, to the nearest 500, how many have died in the six-week war, and he had spent \$5.5 million in the area in the past four months, building schools, paying for generators and hiring contractors. He has put 8,000 soldiers men to work at \$4.50 a day for such tasks as cleaning sewer pipes.

"They know if we go, the money goes," said Capt. Robert Gallimore, Bathurst's deputy. "So they want us here — not desperately, but as a necessary evil."

who support it are more likely to underestimate the death toll.

The survey also asked, "How carefully would you say you follow news media coverage of America's military occupation of Iraq?"

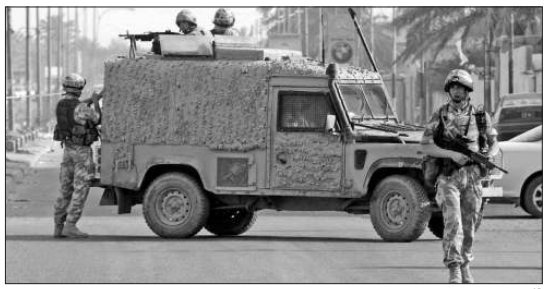
Forty-two percent said "very closely," 47 percent said "somewhat closely" and 11 percent said "not closely."

People who say they are following war news closely are much more likely to know how many Americans have died in Iraq than people who don't read or watch war accounts in newspapers

and on television. The proportion who correctly identified that "about 1,500" have died in Iraq was 51 percent among people who follow war news "very closely," 34 percent among those who follow war news "somewhat closely" and 25 percent who are "not closely" following news from Iraq.

People were also asked, "Despite everything that has happened, do you think the United States has done a good thing or a bad thing by sending our military to occupy Iraq?" Forty-seven percent said the United States has done "a good thing," 44 percent said "a bad thing," and 9 percent were unsure.

The survey was conducted by telephone from Jan. 30 through Feb. 10 at the Scripps Survey Research Center at Ohio University. It is a margin of error of about 4 percentage points. It was funded through a grant from the Scripps Foundation.



Members of the British Royal Engineer High Risk Search team seal off a road Feb. 5 in Basra, Iraq, near Qurnah, where 1,000 members of the Welsh Guard try to keep the peace.

No exit for British troops in Qurnah

BY DOUG STRUCK

The Washington Post

QURNAH, Iraq — The election is over here in the backcountry, and by local accounts, it was a grand success. The Marsh Arabs dressed in festive robes to vote. The Iraqi police and guardsmen were at their proudest. No one got shot, or even shot at — unusual here.

Far from the bombs and politics in Baghdad, this remote bit of Iraq is now fairly quiet. But one day this week, Capt. Alexander Spry and the men of his Welsh Guards company were out on patrol, just as they were before the Jan. 30 vote. Jolting along a rutted dirt road, past a squallish strip of huts, they had guns and waves at the ready. Either might be needed.

British officers such as Spry say they still have much to do before foreign military forces can leave Iraq. The narrow task that brought them here — to help topple Saddam Hussein — has been accomplished, but the approximately 175,000 troops from 29 foreign countries find themselves wrapped in the suffocating embrace of local problems and ancient grudges left to their sole disposal.

They sort out tribal rivalries, arrest car thieves, spot crooked contractors, hire men to clean sewers and restore order to gasoline lines. At the same time, they are trying to train Iraqis to replace them and to reconstruct where there was little construction to begin with — all while keeping the peace.

"We've made good progress, and there's more to be made," said Lt. Col. Ben Bathurst, who leads about 1,000 soldiers of the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards, in Maysan province.

Although he insisted "we're not going to be here forever," Bathurst acknowledged that the British army's unit was nowhere in sight. When the Welsh Guards leave in a few months, another British unit will take over, and the British are moving into a nearby area as Dutch troops withdraw.

Whenever local officials complain about the troops, "I've found the best way to combat that is to say, 'OK, we'll pull out tomorrow. Then what will you do?'" The question silences critics, Bathurst said.

The situation in Maysan, the poorest of Iraq's 18 provinces, illustrates how difficult it will be for the United States and its allies to extricate themselves from Iraq no matter how successful January's election turns out to have been or how much progress is made against the insurgency.

Tucked away in southeastern Iraq, Spry and his convoy of bristling Land Rovers are aliens as they patrol a 12-mile strip of huts along a canal. Smiling, strong women and squealing children emerge to greet the patrol.

There has not been much news here since a flare-up in August that left 10 British soldiers killed in intense fighting the British Army has been in since the Falklands War" in the early 1980s. All the local politicians say the British should stay.

"The coalition forces are like a doctor. When the patient has recovered, the doctor can leave," said Hashim Shawki, the local head of a major Shiite Muslim party, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

The biggest question is who would replace British forces at the authority here. Two British companies live with the Iraqi National Guard, and the Welsh Guards work daily to train guardsmen and police.

When it comes to encouraging harmony here, Bathurst says, the best bet is reconstruction projects. He said he had spent \$5.5 million in the area in the past four months, building schools, paying for generators and hiring contractors. He has put 8,000 soldiers men to work at \$4.50 a day for such tasks as cleaning sewer pipes.

"They know if we go, the money goes," said Capt. Robert Gallimore, Bathurst's deputy. "So they want us here — not desperately, but as a necessary evil."



PHOTOGRAPHER'S MATE 2ND CLASS MARK ALLEN LEONISIO/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS San Francisco is shown in dry dock to assess damage sustained after running aground approximately 350 miles south of Guam on Jan. 8.

San Francisco skipper stripped of command after sub accident

BY JON R. ANDERSON
Stars and Stripes

The commander of the nuclear-powered submarine which ran aground last month in the Western Pacific, killing one sailor and wounding dozens, was relieved of command in a quiet, behind-closed-doors hearing Saturday morning in Japan.

Cmdr. Kevin Mooney was stripped of his command and issued a career-killing letter of reprimand for failing to implement "several critical navigational and voyage planning procedures," according to a Navy announcement after the hearing.

"By not ensuring these standard procedures were followed, Mooney hazarded his vessel," reads the announcement. Cmdr. Andrew Hale, deputy commander of Submarine Squadron 15, who was given temporary command of the San Francisco as the incident was being investigated, is now the skipper.

Mooney appeared before 7th

Fleet commander Vice Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert at fleet headquarters in Yokosuka on Saturday morning in what the Navy dubs "Admiral's Mast," a form of non-judicial punishment that stops short of the criminal proceedings of a court martial.

"He was reprimanded for hazarding a naval vessel," Greenert's spokesman Cmdr. Ike Skelton told Stars and Stripes.

"Cmdr. Mooney also was relieved due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command."

Skelton, however, was unable to point to any specific evidence or exactly what standard procedures were not being followed that led Greenert to his conclusions. At



Mooney

issue from the beginning has been whether Mooney had access to charts that would have indicated dangerous waters in his area.

"I have no details on that," said Skelton. Nor could Skelton say what Mooney should have done differently prior to the crash.

Much of the Pacific Ocean's vast and varied undersea landscape remains poorly charted and Pentagon officials have said the primary maps given to Mooney indicated no dangerous obstacles where the crash took place on Jan. 8, about 350 miles south of the submarine's homeport in Guam.

Mooney was relieved of command to proceed with Admiral's Mast before the investigation into the accident was complete.

Skelton said some information had surfaced in the course of the investigation that "Vice Adm. Greenert felt there was enough evidence to proceed to non-judicial punishment proceedings."

E-mail Jon R. Anderson at: andersonj@mail.eastripes.od.mil

DOD: Homosexual discharges lower since 9/11 attack

Statistics show drop near 50 percent

BY EVELYN NIEVES
AND ANN SCOTT TYSON
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The number of gay and lesbian soldiers discharged under the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy has dropped by almost half since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and are at the lowest levels since the Department of Defense began keeping such figures in 1997.

Significant declines have occurred in every branch of the armed forces, according to the statistics released Friday by the Defense Department. The Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy discharged fewer gay and lesbian soldiers in 2004 than in any year since the Pentagon began tallying the number of its "homosexual separations" in 1997. Eight years ago.

The Army's discharges represented the lowest number of discharges in five years.

Overall, the total number of soldiers discharged under the law banning gays and lesbians in the military has dropped from a high of 1,227 in 2001 to 653 in 2004.

A Defense spokeswoman declined comment on the statistics, referring questions to the individual services.

Spokespersons for the services said they were hard pressed to single out a specific reason for the decline.

"Obviously, it's a very controversial issue," said Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty, a spokesman for the Army, which, in relation to the total size of each of the services, had the highest proportion of gays departing last year. "I just got the figures and I don't know why" they fell.

Gay rights organizations said the decline was easy to explain: Pressed for personnel since the war on terror began, the military needs soldiers and so isn't discharging homosexuals.

It may be more subtle than that, however, said Charles Moskowsky, professor emeritus of military sociology at Northwestern University and an architect of the "don't ask, don't tell" concept.

He said the vast majority of dismissals for violations of "don't ask, don't tell" come when soldiers volunteer their sexual orientation to their superiors.

Fewer than 20 percent of the discharges resulted from soldiers being caught with a member of the same sex in a compromising position or from investigations of their conduct.

A central reason for the decline may be that gays are not telling of their sexual orientation as frequently since 2001, Moskowsky said in an interview.

Given the current stress on military services, he said, individuals who say they are gay may not be immediately granted an honorable discharge.

"It may be that if someone tells ... they don't let them go now," Moskowsky said.

Declaring one's homosexuality is still "the easiest way to get out with an honorable discharge," he said, adding that "being a conscientious objector is a big hassle."

Groups that advocate for an abolishment of "don't ask, don't tell" said the new figures put to rest the hypocrisy of the military's position that homosexuals are bad for morale, given that gays and lesbians are less likely to be discharged in times of war, when soldiers are needed most.

"Our general view is that these discharges show that we just don't need 'don't ask, don't tell,'" said Sharon Alexander, a lawyer for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, an advocacy group for homosexuals in the military.

"The numbers are down because in a time of war, we need the best and the brightest that we can get. And the best and brightest include gay soldiers."

But, at a time when Arabic and Farsi translators are needed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the military continues to discharge gay linguists, Alexander said. "Twenty linguists have been discharged in the last five years, and I'd say that one discharge under 'don't ask, don't tell' is one too many at this point."

In December, Servicemembers Legal Defense Network filed a lawsuit against the Department of Defense, Cook v. Rumsfeld, in federal court in Massachusetts on behalf of 12 lesbian and gay veterans seeking reinstatement in the armed forces.

Each plaintiff was discharged under "don't ask, don't tell" and three served in direct support of operations in the Middle East.

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IN THE WORLD

Rumsfeld calls for unity in war on terror

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN

The Associated Press

MUNICH, Germany — Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, taking a conciliatory tone, said Saturday the U.S.-European alliance can withstand its current differences and he urged unified efforts to defeat terrorism and deter weapons proliferation.

Referring to his earlier critical description of European nations that opposed the Iraq war as "old Europe," Rumsfeld said, "That was old Rumsfeld," drawing laughs from officials at a security conference.

"Our collective security depends on our cooperation and mutual respect and understanding," Rumsfeld said. Among those attending the Munich Conference on Security Policy were U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and German Defense Minister Peter Struck.

Rumsfeld called for further cooperative efforts to counter the spread of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

"Our Atlantic alliance relationship has navigated through some choppy seas over the years. But we have always been able to resolve the toughest issues. That is because there is so much to unite us: common values, shared histories and an abiding faith in democracy," Rumsfeld said.



U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld gestures at the beginning of the Munich Conference on Security Policy in a hotel in Munich, southern Germany, on Saturday.

The Pentagon chief said joint legal, diplomatic and intelligence efforts were crucial.

"By now, it must be clear that one nation cannot defeat the extremists alone," Rumsfeld said.

"It will take the cooperation of many nations to stop the proliferation of dangerous weapons... and it surely takes a community of nations to gather intelligence about extremist networks, to break up financial support lines, or to apprehend suspected terrorists," Rumsfeld said.

He added, "The military can only be part of the solution and it is always the last resort."

The secretary singled out France and Germany, two of the most vocal critics of the U.S.-led war in Iraq, for praise for their arrests of suspected Islamic extremists last month.

Rumsfeld came out strongly against a suggestion to move away from NATO as the main vehicle for trans-Atlantic dialogue.

"NATO has a great deal of energy and vitality," he said.

Germany calls for U.S. aid to end Iran's isolation

The Associated Press

MUNICH, Germany — Germany appealed Saturday for the United States to join Europe in ending the isolation of Iran, saying economic and security incentives were needed to persuade Tehran to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

"I strongly encourage the U.S. administration to actively support the Europeans' diplomatic efforts," German Defense Minister Peter Struck told a security conference.

"We must overcome Iran's massive isolation, for Iran will only abandon its nuclear ambitions for good if not only its economic but also its legitimate security interests are safeguarded."

The speech was drafted for German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, but was delivered by Struck after Schroeder dropped out of the annual conference due to flu.

Germany, France and Britain are leading European diplomatic efforts to persuade Iran to drop activities that could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

They are offering financial and technical assistance and trade talks as incentives.

The United States has worried Europeans by refusing to rule out military strikes if diplomacy fails. Washington has urged the Europeans to take a tougher line by threatening Tehran with U.N. sanctions if it fails to give stronger nuclear guarantees.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana said Iran should be in no doubt of the consequences of failing to resolve the nuclear standoff.

"It will take Iran into a downward spiral of suspicion, isolation and poverty, perhaps even danger," Solana told the conference. "It would be very bad for us, bad for the Middle East and it would be very bad for Iran."

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Europe and the United States shared the aim of ensuring Iran does not develop nuclear weapons technology.

"There is very broad agreement that it is not in the interests of the world that there should be a nuclear program in Iran," Rumsfeld told the conference, adding, "There is not much daylight between the approach of the United States and the Europeans."

North Korea urges loyalty from people

BY SANG-HUN CHOE

The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea urged its impoverished people Saturday to rally around Stalinist leader Kim Jong Il, after Washington rebuffed the communist North's demand that the two sides hold bilateral talks to curb nuclear tension.

Pyeongyang's state-run daily newspaper Rodong Sinmun allotted the whole front page of its Saturday edition to an editorial saying "the single-minded unity serves as the strongest weapon," said the official news agency KCNA.

"At a time like this, when the situation gets tense, no task is more important than to strengthen our single-minded unity," the editorial said.

Minju Joson, another state-run daily, said that "devotedly protecting the leader is our life and soul." North Korea also repeated warnings of military clashes on its loosely defined and tense western sea border with South Korea. It accused the South of infiltrating a warship into the communist state's waters Saturday following "a grave situation created due to the U.S. imperialist warhawks' invariable hostile policy toward the (North)."

North Korea's navy command said "such dangerous military provocations may entail a very serious disaster," according to a news release carried by KCNA.

The accusations, repeated several times in recent weeks and denied by the South, coincided with the worsening nuclear standoff.

The two Koreas fought bloody naval skirmishes in western waters in 1999 and 2002.

The surge in communist rhetoric followed North Korea's announcement Thursday that it had nuclear weapons for self-defense. With that declaration, Kim brandished his strongest diplomatic card yet and dramatically escalated the nuclear standoff with Washington and its allies. North Korea's claim could not be independently verified.



Pakistani villagers try to catch people's attention after being stranded when a bridge was washed away by floodwaters in Agore, 162 miles west of Karachi, Pakistan, on Saturday. Rescuers have recovered 135 bodies from floodwaters in a southwestern province where heavy rains caused a large dam to burst, sending torrents of water through towns and villages.

Mother Nature beats on Pakistan

The Associated Press

UTTHAL, Pakistan — The death toll from a burst dam in Pakistan rose to 135 on Saturday as troops and rescue workers searched for survivors, and the country's total number of deaths from weeklong rains and avalanches rose to 278, officials said.

"So far, Pakistan army, navy and coast guards have pulled out 135 bodies from floodwaters in Pasi and two nearby districts," said Mohammed Ilyas, a senior official at the provincial Crisis Control and Management Cell in Quetta, capital of the southwestern province of Baluchistan.

Heavy rains apparently caused the 490-foot-long Shakhori Dam to burst late Thursday in Baluchistan's Pasi area, about 1,180 miles southwest of the national capital, Islamabad.

About 500 people were still missing, Ilyas said.

"This was the flash floods damaged 18,000 homes in Baluchistan and a large number of people are spending nights in mountains and other safer places — in chilly weather," he said.

Pakistan's state-run Associated Press of Pakistan news agency quoted a Baluchistan government spokesman, Abdul Razik, as saying that the dam accident's death toll has jumped to 135 from the previous official figure of 80.

Troops and police also raced to two villages in Pakistan's part of Kashmir on Saturday after avalanches buried several homes, killing at least 38 people, said Tahir Mahmood Qureshi, a senior police officer in the area.

A major avalanche struck a small valley Friday in Sawat, a scenic mountainous region in northwestern Pakistan, damaging all 20 homes there.

It was not clear whether there were any casualties, said an area police official, Ataulah Wazir.

Before dawn Saturday, avalanches buried several mud-brick homes in villages around the Neelum valley, 60 miles northeast of Muzaffargarh, the capital of Pakistan's portion of Kashmir, said Tahir Mahmood Qureshi, a senior police officer in the area.

At least 30 soldiers were reported missing after an avalanche buried their vehicles Thursday on a mountain road in another part of northwestern Pakistan.

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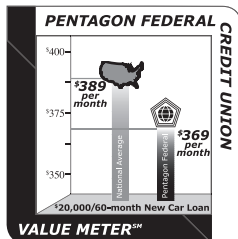


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British troops to leave Indonesia

Sri Lanka couple fighting for custody of 'Baby 81' undergo DNA testing

BY CHRISTOPHER BODEEN

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — About three dozen British pilots and other personnel who have been in hardest-hit Aceh province since Jan. 2 prepared to leave the area on Sunday.

A Royal Navy vessel, the HMS Scott, remains in Indonesian waters with a team of British scientists and Indonesian naval officers conducting a detailed survey of the ocean floor near the earthquake's epicenter off the coast of Sumatra Island. The ship was scheduled to depart Feb. 15.

The move follows the departure of about 10,000 U.S. troops from the area, while another 5,000 still remain, mostly based on U.S. ships. About a dozen countries have sent forces into the area, including Australia, Japan and France, which sent around 1,000 troops each.

Meanwhile, the long search for the parents of "Baby 81," an infant boy found in the debris of the tsunami in Sri Lanka, took a big



A Sri Lankan policeman guards the famous tsunami survivor infant dubbed "Baby 81" inside a ward as people watch from outside at a hospital in Kalmunai, Sri Lanka.

step forward with the completion of DNA tests.

The DNA tests were done on the 3-month-old boy and a couple who claim to be his parents. The results are likely to be announced next week, said Mohammed Nazir, a court registrar.

The baby boy's story has captured hearts in Sri Lanka and the world, becoming a symbol of families torn apart by the Dec. 26 tsunami tragedy, which killed at least 165,000 people and left up to 142,107 missing and presumed dead across 11 countries around

the Indian Ocean.

Nine women initially claimed the baby, but only one couple — Murugupillai and Jenita Jayarajah — formally pressed their case in court. The distraught couple this week had tests done to genetically compare them with a sample taken from the baby.

The Jayarajahs, who lost their home and family records in the tsunami, have spent seven weeks trying to obtain the boy they call Abilass.

As the relief effort swings from an emergency operation to one focused on rebuilding, Indonesian authorities announced new measures restricting reconstruction along coastlines.

Residents whose homes or businesses were swept away will be asked to rebuild away from the shore so mangrove forests can be planted there to act as a natural barrier against high surf. The Jakarta Post paper reported.

In moderately damaged areas further inland, authorities would limit homes and other development, such as farms, fisheries and city gardens.

Rice offers stylish image of U.S.

BY ANNE GEARAN

The Associated Press

PARIS — It will take some doing to dispel the current European caricature of Americans and their president as being reckless and out of touch, but it doesn't hurt to speak French and wear a superbly cut suit while trying.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was the new face of U.S. foreign policy in more ways than one. On her first foreign trip as President Bush's chief diplomat, Rice is displaying a sophisticated style right at home on the streets and in the salons of taste-making capitals such as Rome and Paris.

Her custom-made suits have included a black boucle number with gold brocade that probably cost more than your first car. She favors chic Italian heels, nipped waists and understated jewelry.

Rice's eight-day hopscotch across Europe and the Middle East is meant to project a different image of the United States, and change the subject from frustration and anger over the Iraq war.

She is resolute in defending American policies, many of which she helped direct as Bush's first-term national security adviser.

But she also comes with intellectual and academic bona fides, as well as years of training in classical piano.

She visited a Parisian music school Wednesday — Conservatoire Hector Berlioz — in a cultural grace note after her speech, inviting debate with the French political elite on Tuesday.

Rice watched and tapped her toes to keep time as a music teacher led a group of students ages 7 to 9 through their scales. She told the youngsters she learned to read music at age 3. "It takes a lot of work to learn to read music," she said. "You have to practice and practice and practice."

She also heard much older students preparing for a Beethoven recital and told them she is working to master a piano piece by Anton Dvorak.

Rice worked the French national motto, "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite," into her speech at the political science academy Sciences Politiques Institute, although her accent was distinctly American.

She charmed some in the audience, including Sciences Po economist Francois Rachline, who called her "courageous."

Wednesday morning's Le Figaro gave her a complimentary review.

"With an impeccable silhouette, she put the 'la' back in the new diplomacy," the newspaper said.

Rice's photograph has been on the front pages of newspapers across Europe for most of the month, with never a hair out of place.

Rice has remarked that the paparazzi-like coverage was jarring, although she has had moments in the limelight, even posing for Vogue in a black evening gown with decolletage.

The intensive coverage of Rice's trip is testament both to the interest Europeans have in the plans and policies of their much larger ally across the Atlantic and to a curiosity about Rice herself.



Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's style shows in the tailored suit she wore in Paris on Tuesday.

Poll: Italians are Europe's biggest food chauvinists

The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — When it comes to culinary chauvinism, Italians take the cake.

Spaniards rave over their pickled octopus and blood sausage, but Brits and Germans — who flock here for vacation and retirement — can't stand the stuff. As for English fare, many Londoners pooh-pooh their own steak-and-kidney pie.

Thus reads a six-country poll

released Thursday on what Europeans like and don't like to eat.

Those proudest of their national fare are the Italians. A robust 89 percent of those questioned prefer it to any other kind of cuisine, according to the survey carried out by British pollster MORI.

Spain came in second with 85 percent, followed by the French at 76 percent.

Those least enthused by their own cuisine are the Dutch. They

eat things like "zuurkool met rookworst," a hodgepodge of sauerkraut with potatoes and smoked sausage.

The survey questioned about 5,500 people in Britain, Spain, France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. It was commissioned by the hotel and restaurant-supply branch of the American paper manufacturer Kimberly-Clark.

Italians seek out pasta and

other carbohydrates, even when they travel abroad, said Alessandro Cincello, a chef and cooking teacher in Rome. They also crave mozzarella cheese, tiramisu and cappuccino.

The only other thing Italians really miss as much as food when they are abroad is the weather, which can be considered the other chauvinistic element of our culture," Cincello said.

Associated Press writer Giorgio Paolotti in Rome contributed to this report.

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IN THE STATES

Howard Dean elected to lead Democratic Party

BY WILL LESTER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats elected Howard Dean chairman of their national party on Saturday, casting their lot with a skilled fund-raiser and organizer whose sometimes caustic, blunt comments can lead to controversy.

The 447-member Democratic National Committee chose Dean on a voice vote to replace outgoing party chief Terry McAuliffe. The former Vermont governor and presidential candidate had promised to rebuild the state parties, take the offensive against Republicans, and better explain party positions on issues.

Democrats are eager to renew their campaign to regain political power, though some admit to a bit of anxiety, with Republicans firmly in control of almost everything. "We only have one way to go, and that's up," Georgia delegate Lonnie Platt said.

For Joyce Casack, a Florida delegate, it's time for Democrats to embrace their party's values.

"We are trying so hard to be like Republicans and we're not. I think Howard Dean says clearly that we are different," Casack said.

Democratic leaders, who were

initially wary of a Dean chairmanship, started embracing his leadership after it became apparent he was strong enough to claim the job. Several high-profile Democrats considering a bid for chairman backed out of the race.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, not always a Dean supporter, said Friday, "He has used the power of technology, the force of his personality and the depth of his ideals to bring new people into the party."

Dean told Democratic committee members Friday that it's important to learn to be more comfortable discussing the party's core values.

"The way I hope to deal with that problem, is not to abandon our core principles, but talk about them in a different way," he said. Democrats are not pro-abortion, but "we are the party in favor of allowing women to make up their own minds about their health care," Dean, a physician, said.

Democrats are not for gay marriage, but "we are the party that has always believed in equal rights under the law for all people," he said.

"We are the party of moral values," Dean said. "There is nothing moral about cutting 300 million dollars that is used to feed starving children."

Dems under Dean

NEW CHAIRMAN: Howard Dean, a former presidential candidate, was elected Democratic national chairman by members of the Democratic National Committee.

DEMOCRATS' GOALS: Dean wants to lead the party toward a more aggressive approach with Republicans, staying on offense and learning how to talk more effectively about Democratic positions on the issues.

PARTY BUILDING: His leadership plan calls for investing more in state parties, but requiring them to provide detailed plans of how they will use the money. He also wants to develop better grass-roots support in the states so Democrats can recruit more people locally to get out the vote.

— The Associated Press



Dean



AP photos

Artists Christo, left, and Jeanne-Claude are joined by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, right, to open the artists' "The Gates" art project in New York's Central Park on Saturday.

Art project opens with unfurling of 'The Gates'

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With flowing fabric the color of a sunrise, "The Gates" — a massive public art installation — was unfurled Saturday for the start of a 16-day stay transforming miles of footpaths in Central Park.

The project opened with Mayor Michael Bloomberg dropping the first piece of saffron-colored fabric to the cheers of a huge crowd. He was joined by exhibit creators Christo and Jeanne-Claude.

The crowd counted down the seconds before Bloomberg, a longtime backer of the project, opened the exhibition at 8:30 a.m.

The weather was windy and cold as the first fabric dropped from one of the 7,500 16-foot-high gates, creating what the artists billed as a "visual golden river" along 23 miles of the park's footpaths. More than 1 million square feet of fabric was used by the artists.

Its official title — "The Gates, Central Park, New York, 1979-2005" — refers to the art-

ists' conception of the idea 26 years ago. It was expected to take about two hours to drop the fabric from all the gates.

"It's a bit insane, but that's why everybody is here," said Ali Naqvi, who was forced to come to the unveiling by his fiancée.

Among the first folks there were 17 fourth-graders from an elementary school in Queens. The group boarded a bus before sunrise and made the trip into Manhattan, where they were suitably impressed by the spectacle.

"It's a waste of money, but it's fabulous," said student Shikana Jayson. "It brings happiness when you look at it."

Visitors to the park had already admired the vinyl gates, even with the fabric still tucked inside "cocoon" on top of the structures.

"I think it's fantastic," said Dominique Borel, who was walking her dog, Mickey, on Friday. "I love it. I think it's exhilarating." Mickey was wearing an orange scarf around his neck in honor of the project.



Pedestrians walk beneath "The Gates," on Saturday, which transforms miles of footpaths in Central Park.

Bush presses Social Security

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush warned Saturday that if Congress does not act now to overhaul Social Security, the choices ahead will be harsh and painful.

He repeated his call to add private accounts to the system.

As he has in visits to eight states, Bush emphasized in his weekly radio address that the system will soon run short of money, with more going out to pay benefits than is collected in taxes.

"If we do not act now to avert that outcome, the only solutions would be dramatically higher taxes,

massive new borrowing or sudden and severe cuts in Social Security benefits or other government programs," he said.

Responding for the Democrats in their radio address, Sen. Charles Schumer of New York said the program needs "fine-tuning," not replacement "with something completely different."

The program's trustees have said the program will begin to run a deficit in 2018 and by 2042, it will only be able to pay 73 percent of promised benefits.

"We cannot pretend that the problem does not exist," Bush said. "Social Security will go broke when some of our younger workers get ready to retire, and that is a fact."

Oregon man arrested, accused of trying to set up mass suicide pact with women

The Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. — A man used an Internet chat room to try to set up a mass suicide on Valentine's Day involving more than two dozen women across the United States and Canada, authorities said.

Gerald Krein, 26, was arrested Wednesday at his mother's mobile home in Klamath Falls and faces charges of solicitation to commit murder, sheriff's deputies said. Investigators are subpoenaing chat room records to try to

contact people who may have planned to take part in the suicide.

Detectives learned of the plan from a woman in Canada who said she saw the message in a Yahoo chat room that had the words "Suicide Ideology" in the title.

The woman told detectives she was going to take part in the suicide but had second thoughts when another chat room participant said she would do it and talked about killing her two chil-

dren before taking her own life, said Klamath County Sheriff Tim Evinger.

"Our primary goal is to try to locate where these endangered children might be," Evinger said. "We need to investigate where these other computers are. Hopefully we can intervene if anyone still has the notion to follow through with this."

The chat room participants planned to log in on Valentine's Day and commit suicide while keeping in touch over the Internet, Evinger said.

Studies suggest testing all Americans for HIV

By LINDA A. JOHNSON

The Associated Press

Urging a major shift in U.S. policy, some health experts are recommending that virtually all Americans be tested routinely for the AIDS virus, much as they are for cancer and other diseases.

Since the early years of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, the government has recommended screening only in big cities, where AIDS rates are high, and among members of high-risk groups, such as gay men and drug addicts.

But two large, federally funded studies found that the cost of routinely testing and treating nearly all adults would be outweighed by a reduction in new infections and the opportunity to start patients on drug cocktails early, when they work best.

"Given the availability of effective therapy and preventive measures, it is possible to improve care and perhaps influence the course of the epidemic through widespread, effective and cost-effective screening," Dr. Samuel A. Bozzette wrote in an editorial accompanying the studies, which appeared in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

A failure to institute such screening at doctors' offices and clinics would be "a critical disservice" to patients with the AIDS virus, "the future health of the nation," wrote Bozzette, who is from the University of California at San Diego and the Rand Corp., the think tank in Santa Monica, Calif.

Dr. Robert Janssen, director of HIV-AIDS prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said the CDC will re-evaluate its guidelines over the next two years, and will consider the study's findings as well as the availability

The case for screening everyone

The Problem: Many HIV patients aren't diagnosed until symptoms begin. At that point, today's powerful drug cocktails are less effective in controlling the virus and prolonging life.

New Data: Two large studies find that testing all adults once, and testing people in major cities or high-risk groups every three to five years, would be a cost-effective way to reduce new infections about 20 percent each year and get patients needed help.

Current Policy: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends HIV testing only for people in high-risk groups or cities.

Impact: A top CDC official says the agency will consider the data as it re-evaluates its policy and expects some private insurers now will encourage more HIV testing.

From The Associated Press

of new, rapid HIV tests that produce results in a half-hour instead of the usual week or two.

Who would bear the cost of expanded testing — and the cost of the treatment, which runs to at least \$15,000 a year — remains a sticky question amid government cutbacks in health-care funding.

However, Janssen said the studies' findings could lead to some private insurers to encourage more HIV testing.

One of the studies, by researchers at Duke and Stanford universities and the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System, estimated that routine one-time testing of everyone would cut new infections each year by just over 20 percent, and that every HIV-infected patient identified would gain an average of 1½ years of life.

The other study, by Yale and Harvard researchers, found that testing people every three to five years would be cost-effective for all but the lowest-risk people, such as those who are celibate or are in monoga-

mous heterosexual relationships. And even for those people, one-time testing was found to be cost-effective.

Nationwide, about 40,000 new HIV infections occur each year. An estimated 950,000 people are infected with the virus, but about 280,000 of them do not know it. CDC guidelines recommend routine tests wherever the prevalence of HIV infection is more than 1 percent — basically, cities and some densely populated suburbs.

"If you need proof of the fact that it's not working, look at all the people who have slipped through the cracks — 280,000," said A. David Paltiel of the Yale School of Medicine's division of health policy, lead author of the second study.

The VA-funded study found that in areas where about 1 in 100 patients has undiagnosed HIV — where CDC calls high-risk settings — widespread testing would cost about \$15,100 for each year of good health gained by people diagnosed with the virus, counting the benefits to their sexual partners.

New HIV strain detected in N.Y.

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — City health officials are working to track down sex partners of a man diagnosed with a rare strain of highly drug-resistant HIV that progressed rapidly to AIDS.

The virus was found in a man in his mid-40s who had unprotected sex with other men, often while using crystal methamphetamine, an addictive stimulant, health officials said Friday.

"We are not aware of another case like this in the United States, or elsewhere," said Dr. Ron Valdiserri, deputy director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention.

The New York Times, citing a person familiar with the case whom it did not identify, reported Saturday that the man was believed to have had unprotected sex with hundreds of people.

The onset of AIDS appears to have occurred within two to three months, and at most 20 months, after infection.

Frieden said he can take 10 years to develop into AIDS.

Some AIDS experts were skeptical. Dr. Robert C. Gallo, a co-discoverer of the AIDS virus and director of the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland, said some patients progress more rapidly to AIDS because they are highly susceptible.

The baby boy at the center of controversy Friday rests at Broward General Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Police discovered the woman who claimed the baby was thrown from a car was actually his mother.

AP



Mom's hoax: Baby not tossed from car

By CURT ANDERSON

The Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — A woman lied about finding a newborn that had been thrown from a moving car because she wanted to abandon the child and conceal her pregnancy from her family, authorities said.

"It's not as horrible as we first thought," Sheriff Ken Jenne said Friday. "The baby was never thrown out of a moving car. This is the case of a disturbed woman who gave birth and did not want to keep her child."

Patricia Pokriots, 38, was committed for psychiatric evaluation under a law that allows for people who are a threat to themselves or others to be held for 72 hours. She was not charged with any crime.

On Thursday afternoon, Pokri-

ots dropped an hour-old baby off at a sheriff's station, telling authorities that she had scooped the boy up after seeing him tossed out of a car



Pokriots

onto the grass, Jenne said. Pokriots told investigators she saw a couple arguing in a car, then witnessed the woman throwing the child from the passenger-side.

Eventually, investigators found inconsistencies in Pokriots' story, and she later acknowledged that she had lied, the sheriff said.

"She has indicated that she does

not want the child," Jenne said.

The 8-pound, 2-ounce boy, whose umbilical cord was still attached when he was brought in, had no injuries. Nurses at the hospital nicknamed him Johnny.

The sheriff said the woman had kept her pregnancy a secret, and had initially planned to take the baby to authorities.

State law allows a mother to abandon a baby at any medical facility or fire station within three days of birth.

But she came up with a cover story after seeing two people argue inside their car, the sheriff said. A boy who was playing nearby did see a couple arguing, but never saw them throw anything out, Jenne said.

Pokriots is a barmaid and has an arrest record including an aggravated battery charge.

Perle: CIA setbacks in Iran hurt operations

By GREG MILLER

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Dozens of CIA informants inside the Iran were executed or imprisoned in the late 1980s or early 1990s after their secret communications with the agency were uncovered by the government, according to former CIA officials who discussed the episode after aspects of it were disclosed during a recent congressional hearing.

As many as 50 Iranian citizens on the CIA's payroll were "rolled up" in the failed operation, according to the former officials, who described the events as a major setback in spying on a regime that remains one of the most difficult targets for U.S. intelligence.

The disclosures underscore the stakes confronting the CIA and its informants at a time when the United States is under pressure to produce better intelligence on Iran and its nuclear activities.

Like Iraq before the U.S. invasion in 2003, Iran is regarded as a "denied" territory by U.S. intelligence, meaning the CIA has no official station inside the country and must depend on recruiting sources outside the Islamic Republic's borders.

Details of the setback were first outlined by former Pentagon official William K. Perle on Feb. 2 in testimony before the House Intelligence Committee. During a hearing on security threats, Perle

was critical of U.S. intelligence capabilities and cited the crackdown on American sources in Iran as an example of the failures that have beset U.S. espionage in the Middle East.

Perle referred to the "display of unbelievable, careless management we put pressure on agents operating in Iran."

When the CIA's sources stepped up their reporting, "the information they provided was of greater frequency and quality than we had previously provided," he said.

Perle said the CIA's sources stepped up their reporting, "the information they provided was of greater frequency and quality than we had previously provided," he said.

Iranian intelligence authorities quickly saw the surge in traffic and ... virtually our entire network in Iran was wiped out."

Former CIA officials familiar with the matter confirmed portions of Perle's account and provided additional details. They said it was not clear that the informants were exposed because of any pressure from the agency to file reports more frequently.

The CIA itself declined to comment on the matter, but a U.S. intelligence official rejected Perle's criticism of the agency's record in the Middle East as ill-informed and outdated.

Famous moms have got it going on

From Wisteria Lane to FHM magazine, motherhood is suddenly sexy

BY LISA ANDERSON
Chicago Tribune

NEW YORK — So long, soccer moms in minivans. Hello, hot moms in miniskirts. Americans may still feel the same way about apple pie, but the image of Mom in the sentimental land of June Cleaver and Harriet Nelson is undergoing what some might call an extreme makeover.

From the voluptuous, fictional, 40-something "Desperate Housewives" of Wisteria Lane to such svelte real-life pushers of prams as actresses Gwyneth Paltrow and Julia Roberts, mothers in popular culture rarely have been portrayed as so stylish, so seductive and so, yes, sexy. So hot, in fact, writers pen songs about them, retailers stock stores for them and publishers make cover girls out of them.

Hot moms, in fact, have graced the covers of three non-mom-oriented magazines this month, obscuring the spreading popularity of a concept that is as complex as it is controversial.

If there are no ugly mothers on Wisteria Lane," as Kathy Newman, an English professor and specialist in media studies at Carnegie Mellon University, pointed out, neither is there a simple definition of what makes a mom hot. Teri Hatcher, who plays the divorced, work-at-home mother of a teenage daughter on ABC's soapy suburban series "Desperate Housewives," appeared on the February covers of two quite dif-

ferent magazines — the upscale fashion book Harper's Bazaar and the down-and-slightly-dirty so-called "lad mag" FHM.

And Elle featured actress Uma Thurman, the 34-year-old mother of a young boy and girl, wearing a Fendi leather jacket and an embroidered shirt that bared a taut bit of belly over a pair of low-slung Diesel jeans — a look that would be equally appropriate on a woman half her age.

But combining sexiness and motherhood can be a tricky equation in a decency-obsessed society with strong feelings regarding what constitutes a good mother, said Sharon Hays, a sociologist at the University of Virginia and author of "The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood."

"Of course, these hot moms have this sexy and alluring side and with that comes a darker side, which is cunning, manipulative, petty and even deadly," said Hays, noting we have been here many times before.

Think Mrs. Robinson in the 1967 film "The Graduate." Think 1978's "Harper Valley PTA." Think 2000's "Erin Brockovich." Think 2002's "White Oleander." All depict sensual women

who drew well outside the traditional G-rated maternal lines of dress and behavior.

The WB Television Network plans an April debut for "Living with Fran," about a miniskirted, middle-age divorcee and mother of two, and last week ABC announced "Soccer Moms," the pilot for a new series starring Kristin Davis as one of a pair of suburban housewives-turned-private-investigators.

Joanne Brundage, founder and executive director of Mothers & More, a 17-year-old national support and advocacy group for mothers, said her members love "Desperate Housewives" because "mothers are absolutely starved for meaty shows about mothers." She said they most identify with Felicity Huffman's character, Lynette, a former high-powered career woman who chose to be a stay-at-home mom and daily wrestles with the challenges of four unmanageable kids and a fading sense of identity.

On the other hand, Brundage noted, her husband's favorite character on the show is Susan, the single mother played by Hatcher. She's not surprised.

"My theory is that as has always been the same with men," she said, "it's always the vixen next door. She's very sweet, but oh mama!"



Roberts



Teri Hatcher
AP

CAREER CENTER

Vice President, Operations (Southwest Asia)

USO has recently been called upon to provide greater assistance to military personnel permanently stationed in or transiting the region of SWA. Some additional centers have been added to our operations and further expansion in the region is likely, to support the deployed military.

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BY SUE ANNE PRESSLEY

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — So far, most of the Valentine's Day customers at Kron Chocolatier have been women, and that's about what co-owner Cheri Friedman has come to expect. By Monday, however, the small chocolate shop in Washington will be wall-to-wall men, clamoring to meet a love and deadline that, for some, is more head-ache than heart song.

"We've had a few guys come in early and spend 15 minutes or a half-hour — 'Would she like this?' 'Would she like that?' There are some of those still out there," Friedman said. "But the last-minute guys come in, and they'll take whatever's on the shelf."

Perhaps it is unfair to highlight the gender differences involved in shopping for a holiday already burdened with romantic symbolism.

But as Valentine's Day becomes an ever-bigger commercial event, pressure has grown to mark the day lavishly, and it is apparently men who feel most of the heat.

"It's the one holiday where every man shops," said Marcia Lyle, owner of Chocolate Moose in downtown Washington. "I've seen the type who clearly does it out of obligation. And then there's the husband who knows his wife's sizes and whether she likes post or pre-eating."

With the flood of advertisements for Valentine jewelry,

candy, lingerie, romantic getaways and other items, there's no escaping the fact that a major gift-giving occasion is on the horizon. Listeners of a local sports radio station are being prodded with frequent advertisements for last-minute gifts that can be ordered online or by phone.

"Most of our audience is male," said Chris Johnson, a senior producer with SportsTalk 980, "and in a jokingly playful way, we're saying, 'Come on, guys, you know you haven't bought anything yet.'"

“It's the one holiday where every man shops.”

Marcia Lyle
owner,
Chocolate Moose

Becky Baines, 22, a marketing assistant who lives in Arlington, said many of her female friends with steady boyfriends are abuzz about Valentine's Day. They have high expectations. "Some of them wouldn't be surprised or be maybe half-expecting to get an engagement ring, but they don't want to say anything," she said.

Jonathan Tycko, on the other hand, said he likes to buy his wife, Joan, candy or books but no longer feels the pressure to produce an eye-popping gift. "It's different once you're married than when you're in the dating stages," said Tycko, 36, a lawyer who lives in Bethesda, Md. "Once you're married, as long as you're comfortable in your marriage, it's just a fun holiday."

Some people end up making their own fun. "I do have a lot of women who come in and say, 'Well, my husband won't buy me the good stuff, so I'll buy it and eat it myself,'" said Friedman of Kron Chocolatier.

Stars, fans say goodbye to Ossie Davis

BY JOSE MARTINEZ AND LEO STANDORA

New York Daily News

NEW YORK — A galaxy of stars and fans gathered in Harlem on Friday to bid a sad farewell to beloved actor, writer and social activist Ossie Davis.

More than 1,000 mourners lined up around the block for hours in the bone-chilling wind to enter the Abyssinian Baptist Church for a last glimpse of the man the Rev. Calvin Butts called "an icon for all America."

"I think that he stood for such integrity and for such grace and power," Oprah Winfrey said.

"I think his life and the life of [wife] Ruby Dee are lives that have been bridges to my own, so I felt like I needed to honor that in some way," she said.

Davis died Feb. 4 in his hotel room in Miami Beach, Fla. The 87-year-old had been in Florida making a film, "Retirement." His funeral will be at noon Saturday at Riverside Church.

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and several other city officials attended Friday's viewing, along with such entertainment luminaries as Danny Glover, Spike Lee, P. Diddy, Diahann Carroll, Dick Gregory and Lynn Whitfield.

They came to the church to honor the man whose history of civil rights activism includes the 1963 March on Washington with Martin Luther King Jr. and the memorable eulogy for his slain friend, Malcolm X, whom he praised as "our own black shining prince."

"He always said, 'Do the right



Top: Ruby Dee departs from the wake of her husband, Ossie Davis, at Abyssinian Baptist Church on Friday in New York. Davis, an actor distinguished for roles dealing with racial justice, died Feb. 4 in Miami. **Top right:** Spike Lee departs from Davis' wake. **Right:** Actors Danny Glover and Lynn Whitfield greet each other outside Davis' wake.

AP photos

thing and you can't do no wrong," recalled retiree Floyd Brown, 67. "To me, he was a legend." Hunching into his coat, he added, "At my age I could be someplace else, but I needed to pay my respects."

Elsewhere on the line of mourners that included some in African garb and others thumping mournfully on small drums was Anita Thompson, a 52-year-old hospital worker who remembers Davis for his commitment to the working man.

"I'm just a babe," she said, "but I'm about what he was about. The

lessons I got from him years ago, I carry with me always."

Store owner Karen Muhammad, 41, of Harlem, said she had always considered Davis and Dee role models for her own 20-year marriage. "I all my life wanted to meet them," she said. "It's unfortunate I have to be here under these circumstances, but I felt I had to stand here."

Many of the mourners rushed from the line and mobbed Dee as she left the church. For a moment, a faint smile replaced the grief on her face and she murmured "thank you" to the crowd.



Tenant house is heart of black heritage complex

Educator's boyhood home is centerpiece of foundation's memorial to racial struggles in S. Carolina

BY JOEY HOLLEMAN

The State (Columbia, S.C.)

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The simple boyhood home of noted black educator Benjamin Mays stood for years on a Greenwood County farm, serving as a repository for hay and, at times, a target of racial hate.

Now, the clapboard structure stands proudly as the centerpiece of a burgeoning heritage complex in downtown Greenwood, an eloquent statement on the fortitude of Mays in particular and his race in general.

"When I'm in the house, it makes me think, 'This man came from so little,'" said Jairus Dayton-Garris, manager of black tourism development for the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor. "Like so many from the South, the focus was on building a future, not what they had to have."

Born the eighth child in a sharecropping family, Mays spent his childhood in the community of Epworth in a four-room house with no frills. That's four rooms, not four bedrooms. The home had no indoor kitchen or bathroom.

Mays overcame the prejudice



THE STATE (COLUMBIA, S.C.)/KRT

The boyhood home of African-American educator Benjamin Mays has moved from a Greenwood County farm to downtown Greenwood, S.C.

and inferior public education offered to blacks in South Carolina in the early 1900s. He talked his parents into allowing him to attend the high school part of South Carolina State College in Orangeburg, then went on to earn an undergraduate degree from Bates College in Maine and master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Chicago.

A Baptist minister, he served

as president of Morehouse College in Atlanta from 1940 to 1967. Along the way, he never shied from speaking his mind about injustices, and he served as a mentor to Martin Luther King Jr. and many other black leaders of the future.

In his autobiography, written in 1971, Mays had few kind words for the leaders of his home state. One of his strongest childhood

memories was of the fear in Epworth surrounding the Phoenix Riots in 1898. Mays was only 5 years old when at least seven blacks were lynched during a voting rights battle in Greenwood County.

Mays was allowed to attend school only four months a year as a child, and his family felt the wrath of pervasive racism. But before his death at age 89 in 1984, Mays' attitude toward South Carolina softened.

Mays returned to Epworth in 1981 for the naming of Mays Crossroads, where U.S. 178 crosses Scott Ferry Road near his boyhood home.

"There was a time when I hated my native state, not the people but for what the politicians did, segregating me so that I could never rise to be what God intended all men to be — free," Mays said at the ceremony.

But later in the speech, he noted how far the state had come and that he considered white political leaders such as W.J. Bryan Dorn and John Drummond his friends.

After the Mays family moved

out of the house near the current Mays Crossroads in the 1930s or 1940s, the owner rented it to other tenants into the 1960s. When it was no longer inhabitable, the structure was used for storage. In later years, as Mays' link to the structure became common knowledge, vandals scratched "KKK" in several places on the wooden outer walls.

The Palmetto Conservation Foundation acquired the house in 2002 and had it moved to a cleared area behind Brewer Hospital, a former nurse training facility for blacks in Greenwood.

A one-room black school used in the early 1900s also was moved to the site.

The Palmetto Conservation Foundation, GLEAMNS and the Heritage Corridor are working with local officials to raise money for a 1,000-square-foot visitors center, where the story of Mays' life and black education in general can be told.

Bush says retirement plan of special benefit to blacks

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — As President Bush laid out his second-term agenda to a group of black pastors and community leaders at a recent meeting, one of the first subjects he raised was Social Security. Bush called his plan to restructure the program crucial to all Americans — but none more so than black Americans, who he said are shortchanged by the current system.

"The president said Social Security reform is especially important to the African-American community because it is so closely tied to life expectancies," said Michelle Bernard, senior vice president of the Independent Women's Forum.

Black Americans' life expectancy is 72.3 years — more than five years shorter than for whites. Black men die even sooner, living an average of 68.8 years, compared with 75.1 years for white men. It is a disparity Bush has highlighted.

"If you really think about that, you have people putting money in the system that aren't — families won't benefit from the system," Bush said last month in an interview. "And, therefore, it seems to me to make sense, if I were a part of a group of people that were being disadvantaged by the Social Security system, that I'd at least like to have the opportunity to have some of the money I put in the system passable to my family."

It is an argument some have found compelling. They say personal accounts would allow workers

who die before they are old enough to collect retirement benefits to leave at least a modest nest egg for their heirs.

"Private accounts could be a plus to anyone whose demographics suggest they are in the workforce, they pay contributions, but they pass on before they are able to draw down benefits," said Gwendolyn King, a former Social Security commissioner who served on a panel that recommended the creation of the accounts.

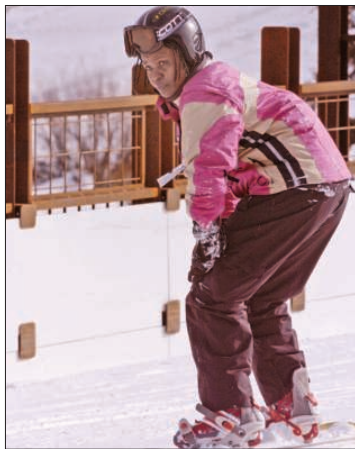
Also, supporters say the accounts would expose a generation of low- and middle-income blacks to the wealth-building power of the stock market. "Anything that gives African-Americans more financial freedom with their own money and introduces African-Americans as a people to investment in the stock market is good," said Robert Johnson, founder and chief executive of Black Entertainment Television.

But some worry the accounts would weaken the safety net that Social Security provides. Critics such as Maya Rockeyemore, vice president of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, note the accounts would be subject to the whims of the stock market. And, she said, blacks are more likely than whites to collect from Social Security's disability and survivor programs.

A 2003 report by the Government Accountability Office concluded that blacks tend to receive a higher rate of return than whites from Social Security because of their heavier reliance on the program's full range of benefits.

"Anything that gives African-Americans more financial freedom ... is good."

Robert Johnson
BET founder



THE DENVER POST/AP

Annette Williams of Detroit rides a snowboard at Lionshead in Vail, Colo., last week for the National Brotherhood of Skiers annual summit.

Black skiers lifted by unity at summit

By DOUGLAS BROWN
The Denver Post

DENVER — Snow and slopes officially brought them to Vail last week, but for the thousands of blacks who traveled to the resort for the National Brotherhood of Skiers annual summit, having a good time was the draw.

"It's like a giant family reunion," said Ben Rosa, 44, a senior executive at IBM who lives in Ridgefield, Conn.

The NBS, a 10,000-member alliance of black ski clubs — the largest ski organization in the world — brings 4,000 or more skiers to a different resort every year, pumping as much as \$5 million into the local economy during the week-long event.

"The summit is the biggest of all" ski gatherings, said Chris Jarrot, vice president of marketing and sales at Vail Resorts, which is hosting the summit.

Added Ian Anderson, spokesman for the Vail Valley Chamber and Tourism Bureau: "It's the kind of group that everyone is thrilled to have here because there is a lot of positive energy, and generally

this is one group that spends a lot of money in town."

Black skiers represented about 1.2 percent of all 57.1 million visits to ski resorts during the 2003-04 season, said David Becher, a research analyst with RRC Associates in Boulder, a market research firm that does work for the ski industry.

Becher said the percentage of black skiers on the slopes has been between 1 percent and 2 percent since the firm started collecting data a few years ago.

About 2,000 registered NBS members came to Vail for this year's summit, and an estimated 2,000 more who aren't members came, too, said Andrea Yowman, the current NBS president.

By bringing blacks from around the country, the summit transforms its host resort from a tangle of slopes, restaurants and hotels dense with white faces into something else: a ski resort where being black doesn't mean being alone.

"Normally, when we go together, we are the only black people on the whole mountain," said Bryan Calhoun, 34, from Atlanta.

Bill would rename roads for civil rights victims

JACKSON, Miss. — Stretches of Mississippi highways in three counties would be renamed for victims of the nation's most infamous civil rights killings under a bill approved Thursday by the state Senate.

A stretch of Mississippi 19 near Philadelphia, believed to be the site of the murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, would be renamed for the three civil rights workers ambushed by the Ku Klux Klan in 1964. A reputed former Klansman, Edgar Ray Killen, was recently indicted in the case.

The bill would also rename a portion of U.S. 49 East in Leflore and Tallahatchie counties the Emmett Till Memorial Highway after the black teen who was beaten to death in 1955, allegedly for whistling at a white woman. That case has been reopened by prosecutors.

From The Associated Press

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Child locked in cage

MINN. ST. PAUL — A mother and her live-in boyfriend are accused of locking the woman's 11-year-old daughter in a chain-link dog kennel in a warehouse basement.

Deborah L. Cameron and Eric Bare appeared in Ramsey County District Court, each charged with two counts of unreasonable restraint of a child, a gross misdemeanor.

Cameron called St. Paul police Jan. 1 to say she was having problems with her daughter and asked them to remove the girl from their home.

When police arrived, they heard the girl screaming. She told them that Bare locked her in a dog cage, hit her and read her diary. Child protection officials removed the girl.

Driver hits family twice

CA. SUNNYVALE — A Sunnyvale man was arrested on attempted-murder charges after he plowed his car into a family of four on a sidewalk, then returned and struck them again, injuring them all, police said.

A 5-year-old boy, his 18-month-old sister and their parents were being treated at a hospital for a range of injuries.

Police said they are still trying to determine what provoked Ngal Fung Fong, 37, to veer onto the sidewalk with his compact sedan and strike the family that was out for a stroll.

"We can find no relationship between the suspect and the victims," said Sunnyvale Police Capt. Craig Farley.

Witnesses told police they saw Fong drive into the family members and then return to hit them again as bystanders were rendering aid.

Record popcorn sale

PA. GIBSONIA — Conny as it sounds, a Cub Scout has set a national record for selling popcorn.

Ryan Cenk, 10, of the Pittsburgh suburb of Richland Township, sold \$25,006 worth of Trail's End popcorn products, popping the old record in the Scouts' annual popcorn sale by about \$5,000.

Cenk more than doubled his sales with one call to ATM Corp., a company that provides mortgage lending services. The company's vice president heard the scout's pitch and decided the popcorn tins would make perfect gifts for employees. The company bought \$13,500 worth of popcorn.

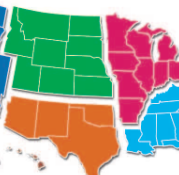
Ryan took the phone away from his ear, looked up and said, "Mom, he wants 450 of the three-way tins," his mother, Colleen Cenk, said. "I got on the extension to make sure there was no misunderstanding."

All told, Cenk sold about 10 tons of popcorn.

Spotlight quiets chatter

ID. ATHOL — Green light. Red light. Lights out.

In an effort to quiet down the lunchroom chatter at Athol Elementary, a spotlight has been mounted that monitors decibel lev-



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

els and signals teachers to turn the lights out when kids get too noisy.

The spotlight is mounted on the lunchroom wall and goes from green to yellow, flashes, and then turns red.

The sound meter can be adjusted to go off at anywhere from 54 decibels to more than 100 decibels. For comparison, noise from a washing machine is about 75 decibels.

The move comes because of the lunchroom's poor acoustics and tile floors. "The sound doesn't have anything to soak into," Principal Connie McGee said.

When the light turns red, the lunchroom stays dark and youngsters have to stay silent until the Talk Light resets and turns green again.

Police officer in gang

GA. ATLANTA — A former police officer has pleaded guilty to a federal civil rights charge accusing him of misusing his authority and participating in a notorious drug gang's activities.

David Alan Freeman, 39, who was once named "officer of the year," admitted that he was a lieutenant in the Diablos gang and misused his police authority to help in the abduction of a rival gang member who was severely beaten, said Patrick Crosby, a spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office.

Crosby said Freeman, a nine-year Atlanta police veteran and former student government president at Georgia State Univer-

sity, also admitted taking part in the gang's activities, including crimes such as robbery and drug trafficking.

Freeman grew up in an area where the Diablos gang operated in Atlanta, official said.

He faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine when he is sentenced May 6, Crosby said.

Rolling U-Haul party

SC. ROCK HILL — Police found more than they bargained for when they stopped a U-Haul truck with a burned-out taillight.

Instead of furniture in the back, police on Monday found a rolling keg party with about 20 people drinking whiskey and beer.

Eleven people were charged with underage drinking.

"They all kind of froze and didn't know what to do, I guess," officer Robert Marshall said.

The partygoers told police they rented the truck for someone's 21st birthday party because the bars were closed. The moving party was traveling streets without a particular destination.

The truck's driver was charged with reckless driving because the people in the back could have been injured, police said. Officers asked the partygoers to call for rides and no one was arrested.

Quake rattles Arkansas

AR. CARAWAY — A small earthquake struck portions of northeastern Arkansas on Thursday, rattling windows and nerves but causing no immediate damage.

A preliminary report from the Earthquake Hazards Program of the U.S. Geological Survey said the 8:05 a.m. quake was centered four miles east of Caraway and had a magnitude of 3.9. A quake of magnitude 4 can cause moderate damage.

The quake occurred at a depth of 9.5 miles in the New Madrid seismic zone.

The tremor was felt as far away as Blytheville, 22 miles to the northeast.

Burglars pick mansions

CT. GREENWICH — In this gated world of great riches, wealth is protected behind high stone walls, intercoms, security cameras and warning signs. And still burglars are managing to break into the mansions of Greenwich.

About 15 homes have been burglarized in the past few months in Greenwich, many in the town's so-called back country where celebrities and corporate executives live.

The burglars have taken at least \$750,000 worth of expensive jewelry, fur coats, cash, credit cards and cameras. They have an eye for the finer things, leaving behind inexpensive jewelry.

Authorities suspect the Greenwich break-ins were carried out by the same burglars, and believe they are operating in at least four other states: New York, New Jersey, Virginia and Maryland.

None of the town's famous residents, who include actors Ron Howard and Mel Gibson, have been victimized, police say.



Playing keep-away

Keara Turner, 3, tries to get a basketball from her brother, Khalil Davis, 10, while playing on the courts of Anderson, S.C.



Barnyard turf war

A farm dog barks at a herd of cattle in a pen on the Baumgartner farm east of Pearl City, Ill.



Snowfall in Kentucky

A light snow covers Main Street in Danville, Ky.



Joe, Kaly and Brad Bousquet slide in South Platt Park in Plattsburgh, N.Y.

Snow day creates more time for play



Solemn sunrise

The rising sun lights up the sky behind the soldiers of a World War II Memorial on a cold, quiet morning at Capitol Lake in Pierre, S.D.



Fun on the ice

Whitefish Lake in Whitefish, Mont.

Jonas Magstadt, 15, left, keeps the puck away from 15-year-old Tyler Gardner, center, and 16-year-old Kris Archer, right, while playing ice hockey on

Colors of crime

MT LIVINGSTON — Sheriff Clark Carpenter says identifying inmates should be a black and white matter, so he's color-coordinating uniforms based on crime.

The Park County Detention Center is outfitting inmates charged with felonies in black and white prison stripe uniforms.

Carpenter said he got the idea on a trip to Canada, when he saw a work crew on the side of the highway in black and white striped clothing.

"It left no question in my mind who those guys were and what they're doing," Carpenter said.

For years, Park County inmates have worn solid orange uniforms, which can be identical to work clothes worn by some road crews.

Tough baby

ME LEE — Nicholas Chandonait is only 5 weeks old, but has endured five surgeries. And there are more on the way.

Nicholas was born Jan. 3 with a complex congenital heart defect and a collapsed diaphragm. During one procedure at Maine Medical Center in Portland, his heart stopped beating and he was dead for one minute, said his mother, Amy Chandonait, 26, of Lee.

Nicholas is able to breathe on his own in the hospital's pediatric intensive care unit, but he must be fed through a feeding tube in his nose, his mother said. A big scar runs across his breastbone. He has had several blood transfusions, has a shunt in his heart and is on several medications.

Yet Chandonait sees signs of strength in Nicholas, who weighs 6 pounds, 3 ounces, and has a shock of thick, dark hair.

"He is actually doing really well now, considering how many surgeries he has had," Chandonait said. "For what he has been through, he looks wonderful."

Underwater discovery

CA SANTA BARBARA — Scientists have discovered a new species of coral off the southern California coast that flames like a pink and white Christmas tree, as well as a new species of worm that lives off it.

Milton Love, a marine biologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and colleagues from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration made the discoveries in 2002 while making fish surveys hundreds of feet below the Channel Islands.

A Tennessee lab determined the new species is a type of black coral — the color it turns when it dies.

Underwater photog dies

HI HONOLULU — A well-known underwater photographer drowned Wednesday while taking surf pictures at Banzai Pipeline.

Jon Mozo, 33, was swimming and taking photos of surfers under a clear afternoon sky. The sequence of events leading to his death are unclear. Mozo had head injuries and no pulse after he was pulled from the water by an off-duty lifeguard and others, Fire Capt. Kenison Tejeda said. He was pronounced dead at Kahuiku Hospital.

The surf at Pipeline was not especially big, but the swell was off of the west, which indicates an extremely strong current, said fellow surf photographer Bernie Baker.

In January 1993, a shark attacked Mozo while he was surfing near Maalekahana. Mozo received 30 stitches on each foot to close the gashes from the attack.

Surgical mishap

NC WILMINGTON — A doctor may have performed the wrong type of gastric bypass surgery on more than 50 patients at a Wilmington hospital, officials said.

Dr. Steven E. Olchowski performed the surgeries between December 2000 and the spring of 2002 at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, which is facing eight malpractice lawsuits stemming from the weight-loss operations.

The lawsuits claim Olchowski told patients he would perform a gastric bypass surgery known as Roux-en-Y, which usually is covered by health insurance. According to the lawsuits, he performed minigastric bypass, which usually is not covered. The difference between the surgeries is how the stomach and intestines are attached. Attorneys for six of the patients said their clients had serious complications such as stomach ulcers and required a second surgery to convert the bypass into a Roux-en-Y.

Theater revitalization

SD LEAD — A historical society has reached a deal to buy an opera house complex that was built by a mining company more than 90 years ago but nearly destroyed in a 1984 fire.

The Historic Homestead Opera House Society will buy the theater and a retail area from Jerikodi Inc., which had been working with the society on the theater renovations, society President Jacques Fuller said.

The society, created in 1997 to develop the restoration plan and organize programming at the theater, decided it needed to own the building itself to make fund-raising easier.

Tattle-totals

RI HANOVER — Police are turning to a telephone tip line to try to stop teen drinking.

The idea is to allow people to leave anonymous tips about underage drinking parties.

"It's not that the main intent is getting people busted," said Hanover Community Counselor Dena Romero. "The most important thing is keeping people safe."

Callers who dial (603) 643-PARTY can leave a message, without having to give their name. "There's no caller ID, so people can call and it truly can be anonymous," said Police Chief Nick Giaccone.

The voice-mail system pages a dispatcher, who listens to the message. If the message is about an upcoming party at a Hanover home, a police officer will call the parents or homeowner and ask if they were aware of the party, Giaccone said. The officer also will inform them about underage drinking laws.

If police believe that the party is still going to happen, they will patrol the area, Giaccone said.

Stories and photos from wire services

We're going to all be together soon'

Sweethearts reunite family 26 years after giving up first child

BY PAULINE ARRILLAGA

The Associated Press

EVERETT, Wash. — He held his son only once, in a sterile office at Catholic Services a week after the boy's birth on Oct. 25, 1977.

Bart Stokes gazed into the eyes as blue as his own, and covered his boy's cheeks in kisses.

"You're coming home with me soon, son," he whispered. "Daddy loves you. We're going to all be together soon."

He was still a child himself, a junior in high school with shoulder-length hair and a lanky teenage frame, hardly the picture of a father.

But a father was all Bart dreamed of becoming. That, and a husband to his girl, Brenda.

He had it all worked out in his head. He cherished Brenda Litzo, had even proposed before they ever learned she was pregnant. His mother would get a bigger apartment with a room for them and the baby. He worked after school at a gas station, and could make enough for them to get by until he graduated and found a permanent job.

The most important thing was keeping his family together.

Yet even the best intentions can fall by the wayside when those older and wiser have other plans in mind. Brenda's parents had already made adoption arrangements, and she was too scared to fight them.

A few weeks after seeing their son, Bart and Brenda found themselves in the same sterile office, adoption papers spread on a table.

They were told the family was Catholic and lived somewhere in metropolitan Seattle. They had one other child, a 13-year-old boy.

Brenda signed her name and slid the document over to Bart. He stared, speechless, then stormed out.

"We can have more kids," Brenda promised him. "We'll always be together." She begged him to just get it over with.

Knowing it was the biggest mistake of his life, he signed.



Bart Stokes, right, and Brenda Litzo hug their son, Andy Fenkner, during a tearful reunion on Feb. 6, 2004, in Scottsdale, Ariz. Stokes and Litzo were teenagers in 1977 when they had Fenkner and were forced to give him up for adoption.

Bart never understood why Brenda went along with the adoption, but once their baby was gone, the couple argued endlessly. Bart dropped out of school and, by Christmas, Brenda had stopped returning his calls.

The snapshot of the tiny baby, one the hospital provided of Michael at 3 days old, never left Bart's wallet.

It remained after he met another woman and got married in 1983, after they had a son together, Bartley Jr., and long after they divorced in 1988. It remained after the birth of his next son, Austin.

Several times through the years, Bart tried to locate his firstborn by contacting various adoption rights groups, but he was told little could be done unless the child registered with them.

He also wondered about Brenda. They'd lost touch, but tucked away in a dresser drawer he kept a high school picture of his first love.

Through friends, he learned she had married, had other children — three boys

— and moved to California. He didn't know, however, that she had also divorced. Now and then, he'd search her married name on the Internet.

Then, in 2001, he registered his name on Classmates.com, a Web site that allows people to track down and contact former schoolmates. Brenda had registered, too. He e-mailed, but got no response.

In November 2003, following the death of one of Brenda's old friends, Bart tried writing again. Still, nothing.

One month later, Bart went into work at Boeing, where he assembles jets, and sat down at a computer. A message popped up in his inbox: "You've received a Classmates Email!"

Brenda, living in Placentia, Calif., had been between jobs, with no access to a computer. But as soon as she received Bart's note, she responded.

"I think of you every year on October 25," she wrote.

They had a long exchange about life, work and their children. At the end, she wrote, "I think of you often."

They never stopped talking again. In January 2004, she came to visit for 10 days. They would also finish the paperwork to petition a court to open Michael's adoption file.

Then a chance conversation with a stranger at a car dealership accelerated the search for their son.

Brenda told her story: that she was in town to reunite with her high school sweetheart and they were hoping to find the son they had put up for adoption.

How old was the child? asked the woman, Michelle Abbott.

Twenty-six, said Brenda: born Oct. 25, 1977.

What a coincidence, Abbott told her. She had a cousin born the very same day. And he was adopted.

Brenda asked: Does he have any brothers or sisters? Just one, Abbott said. A brother, 13 years older.

Michelle Abbott had called her mom, who contacted Abbott's aunt — Michael's adoptive mother.

The families quickly put two-and-two together.

Andy Fenkner had known he was adopted since he was 16, but hadn't searched for his biological parents. Now, word reached him of the strange meeting between his cousin and his aunt. Andy, living in Scottsdale, Ariz., phoned Abbott, who in turn told Bart and Brenda their son was waiting to hear from them.

On Feb. 6, 2004 — just two months after their own reunion — the couple arrived in Scottsdale.

For the first time in more than 26 years, Bart and Brenda held their child.

Their second night together, Brenda told Andy she had something to ask. On Oct. 1, 2005 — the anniversary of when the high school sweethearts started dating — Bart and Brenda plan to finally marry.

Andy said yes, of course, he would walk him down the aisle.

This past November, Brenda and Bart welcomed a second child into the world.

Andy had flown in just to be there. Once in the hospital room, he sat to the side, filming everything, while Bart prepared to deliver child.

As the infant's cries suddenly filled the room, Andy called her by the name his parents allowed him to choose.

"My little baby sister, Madysyn."

Brenda and Bart beamed at their daughter, at their son, at each other — their family, finally together.

Cheerful dog survives trap, shooting

BY DAVID REYNOLDS

The Daily News-Record

HARRISONBURG, Va. — Delilah stretches out on the floor, rests her head on her right paw and lets out a sigh. Even the year-old Lab mix seems to know the last few weeks have been rough.

"I've been shot. I've had my leg caught in a trap, and then I had my leg taken off," said Anne Anderson, director of the Rockingham-Harrisonburg SPCA.

She is speaking for a dog that has come through torment with a sweet, almost appreciative disposition.

Now, after visits to two animal hospitals, treatment from three veterinarians and a couple weeks in foster care, Delilah is ready to settle down in a new home.

"Sometimes we need to go against the odds and win," Anderson said. "And by all standards, this dog should not be with us."

Three weeks ago, Delilah was found with her foot clamped in a metal fox trap. Animal Control officer Bill Hisey said the dog was trapped for 48 hours, her foot cut to the bone. It was late January, and temperatures dropped into the single digits, he remembers.

Delilah used her free legs to scrape a hole to sleep in and gnawed on bark, hoping for nourishment. Two residents found the dog and took her to Hisey's house, he said.

Later, vets found the trap wasn't Delilah's first trauma. Before

amputating her infected leg, they found small white spots all over her skin.

Shotgun pellets left welts, but with nothing under her skin, vets determined she was shot from a distance.

Despite incredible suffering in her first year, Delilah is outgoing, ready to lick any stranger. Her tail wags one direction as her wobbly three-legged gait takes her in another.

When foster owner Luke Ivanoff showed up for Delilah, she expected to carry the dog to her truck. Instead, Delilah hopped in the back, ready to go.

At home, her quick recovery continued. She climbed stairs and joyfully slid across slippery floors. "I've had dogs with illnesses that get depressed," Ivanoff said. "She's not one of them."

One missing leg slow her down, either, Ivanoff says.

But while Delilah has made a brave recovery, her \$950 medical tab has made a dent in a fund set up by the SPCA to pay for the treatment of injured animals, Anderson said. As the SPCA looks for a home for Delilah, it also is looking for donations.

While replenishing the fund would help animals like Delilah, the best way to protect pets is to watch them closely.

"Animals are like children," she said. "They need our supervision and guardianship for their health and safety."



Labrador mix Delilah got her foot caught in a metal fox trap three weeks ago in Rockingham County, Va. As vets were preparing to amputate her infected leg, they found Delilah also had been shot.

Sunday Horoscope

Hunger dictates the value of things under the Taurus moon. The longer a desire goes unsatisfied, the stronger it gets and the more willing you'll be to pay for satisfaction. The Taurus lunar influence stimulates the appetite for beauty and luxury, making us aware of our sensual nature. Here you can satisfy yourself by indulging in food and entertainment.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The law of spiritual detachment applies in obvious ways here. By clinging too readily to the outcome you desire in a relationship, you may be blocking something better from occurring. Loosen your grip!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Events happen to shake you up and switch the emotional in your head. Anything you have been doing in a repetitious and predictable way will be observed on a conscious level. The result is a mind-blowing breakthrough.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your sense of entitlement has wavered between the extremes of feeling unworthy and feeling "all that." A sweet extravagance is offered to you, but will you take it? The choice sets a tone for your entire week.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Intuitively, you create a structure for yourself from which it will be difficult to break free. Perhaps you sign up for a course or enroll in the help of a tough disciplinarian. The benefits of rigorous teaching are numerous.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). In some way, you are singing in the rain—voicing a happy tone in spite of inconsequence or discordant, it's just one of the ways you enforce and nurture your outstanding character.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (February 13). You are utterly energized by your activities this year, doing what you love and loving what you do. The energetic flow starts with changes you make in the next seven weeks. Swift and specific decisions allow you to maximize your talents and make money in an enjoyable way. Motivational and loving signs include Pisces and Virgo. Your lucky numbers are 20, 50, 45, and 12.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). A realization. You may notice for the

first time that you are involved in an ongoing way in a task that is not worthy of you. List the pros and cons of the situation on paper, and send it to me.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Tired of introspection, you now are eager to throw the attention off of yourself and onto a project. You're not being leastening and selfless through this study, though—you can't get around it now.

Holiday Maths

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The spotlight is on your inner being, who emerges with a sideways smirk, ready to prove you are not only capable but stylish and snappy. A checklist ensures you've got the bases covered.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're feisty! Be aware you could be intimidating those who don't know you well. This feisty won't stop you from meeting challenges in your usual way—head on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Some people around you are experiencing trouble adjusting to change. You can set a tone with your actions (not your instruction). Anyone who criticizes you just jealous, so talk to them with a grain of salt.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You respect others, they respect you, and it is, as they say, "all good." So sister clear of power-tripping people who have a tendency to stir the pot for the sake of drama. You don't need it now!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It's the perfect day to research your vision and make it come to life. If you can't see it, add a new dimension to your goal by painting a vivid mental picture of it awakens your desire. Without desire, motivation is lost.

FORECAST FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: Valentine's Day is not just for lovers anymore. Venus and Neptune send an open invitation to commemorate love in its many forms, from the kinsip found in the fellowship of man to familial compassion to the elation of romance. All shades of love deserve to be honored and nurtured, if only in the act of remembering. But the monumental loves tend to be celebrated in a shower fashion under the Taurus moon, which is all about sensuality and luxury.

Creators Syndicate

Dogs inspired islands' name

Can you settle a bet for me? Are the Canary Islands named for the cute little birds or for dogs, like my friend says?

The name Canary Islands comes from the Latin name "Canariae insulae," meaning "dog islands." According to what Pliny the Elder found in the writings of King Juba II, the king of Numidia and Mauretania who lived from 60 B.C. to A.D. 24, the group of islands that Juba explored off the northwest coast of Africa were remarkable especially for the multitude of large dogs that inhabited them. The Latin word for "dog" being "canis," the islands were named "canariae insulae" meaning "dog islands."

It's probable that neither Juba nor Pliny knew it, but the dogs on the islands were most likely brought by earlier invaders from Africa and were not indigenous. A kind of small greenish-brown bird was, however, native to the islands. Some of these birds were brought to Europe in the 16th century and were called "Canary birds" by the English. The name of the birds was shortened to "canary" over time, as the birds were bred to be the greenest to yellow birds that we know today.

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Edition. Readers send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordwatch, P.O. Box 261, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

Woman finds prospective mate more interested in Navy career

Dear Abby: My boyfriend, "Lance," attends the Naval Academy in Annapolis. We have been dating seriously for a long time and have made plans to start our life together when he graduates and heads off to flight school. I intend to leave my job, my family and friends to be with him.

Recently, out of the clear blue sky, Lance told me he has second thoughts about our plans. He said his doubts stem from his concern for my best interests. He feels it would be too difficult for me to continually move over the years, and he would feel guilty asking me to sacrifice so much for him.

I was caught completely off guard. I told Lance that, because I love him so much, I want to give him this new life a chance. We talked for hours, and he decided that although he loves me very much, his life belongs to the Navy, and no one but he should make sacrifices.

Should I try to mend this relationship or let him go?

Still in Love in Maryland
Dear Still: It's apparent that Lance gave the matter considerable thought before he discussed his change of heart with you. "Mending fences" won't work because his mind is already

made up. Speaking metaphorically, the ship has sailed, and you have been left behind. As I see it, you have no choice but to let him go. Make the break a clean one and move on.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: My wife's brother, "George," lives with us. It was my wife's suggestion because he was homeless, and she didn't want him on the streets in the cold weather. She said she wanted him to stay with us for a few months. That was more than three years ago. I can't help with this. George doesn't work, so he's not helping with the bills. He brings women here like it's his house. He smokes dope here and gets drunk. I don't do any of those things. He won't even mow the lawn in the summer.

I have told my wife that George is a 50-year-old man and has got to move elsewhere. She agrees, but says nothing to him. It has led to some serious arguments. I recently left him out of our bedroom to see if it would disappear, and yes, it did. I knew it would. I am ready to leave my own home. What should I do now?

Tired of My Brother-In-Law in North Carolina

A sure-fire way for prospective man to keep self from crying in public

Dear Annie: I recently retired from 33 years of law enforcement and am currently working in Iraq assisting the Iraqi police. I can handle blood and guts all day long, but I always have had a problem with the change of heart with no "cure," all weddings or "Old Yeller," forget it.

I've tried everything from my lip to not attending these functions. Is there a technique I can learn to help me with this problem? I realize it's OK to be emotional once in a while, but there are times when I need to hide these feelings.

Crying Guy
Dear Crying Guy: There's nothing wrong with being sensitive. More men are crying these days, and a large majority of them consider it quite acceptable. The bad news is, there is no "cure." Wear sunglasses when you must attend functions where you anticipate getting teary.

If that isn't enough, keep a can of tin of happy or angry thoughts, and when needed, concentrate on one that will take your mind off the sadness.

Dear Annie: Last year, my parents moved to my town in order to be closer to my family. I love them very much, and as they

are growing older, I feel grateful that they live nearby.

Every day, I bring my folks their mail and stay for a short visit.

The problem is Dad's smoking. He smokes in the house with the windows and doors shut. When I hit the front door, I nearly gag, and it takes everything I can muster to keep breathing. Everything they own smells like smoke.

Dad smokes outside when he visits other people, but he continues to smoke inside his house and his car. I have tried to explain how repulsive this is, but he says, "It's my house, and I'll smoke in it if I want to." Mom has said this heart, has had two strokes and is in a delicate condition. This smoke can't possibly be good for her.

I don't want to stop visiting, but I can't handle these dreaded smoky visits much longer. What can I do?

Smoke Shrouded in California
Dear Smoke Shrouded: Not much. It's his house and his car, and he doesn't have to listen to you. The only person who can demand he not smoke in the house is your mother, and apparently, it doesn't bother her enough to speak up.

You are right that the situation is unhealthy for both of them, but particularly so considering Mom's

Dear Tired: You have done more than enough for your brother-in-law. The time has come for George to sober up, grow up, and take responsibility for himself. Since your wife can't bring herself to let her brother be just who he is, it's up to you. Set a date for him to leave and insist upon it.

Dear Abby: Five months ago, I became involved with a gentleman whom I met at church. He is kind and caring—everything that a girl could look for. We are compatible and get along quite well in more ways than one.

The problem is he is living with someone else, and his job takes up much of his time. When we're together the time goes by so quickly—and then I hear nothing for days on end. He tells me that he cares for me, and I can't about him. I don't do. I'm confused. Should I hide my time in the hope that things will improve?

Conflicted on the East Coast
Dear Conflicted: Face it: Your kind, caring, compatible, churchofing guy already has a hen sitting in his nest. Unless you want to end up with egg on your face, run like the dickens. He's already taken.

Letters for this column—with your name and address—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box #8940, Chicago, IL 60680. Readers who write to Abby on the internet at <http://www.ueexpress.com/dearabby> should use Press Syndicate.

Annie's Mailbox



heart condition. You can give Dad some literature showing how harmful cigarette smoke is for his wife, and you might offer to get them an air purifier, but understand that the most likely is too addicted to give it up.

Dear Annie: My 11-year-old niece has been distributing flyers advertising her baby-sitting services around her neighborhood. The flyer states her contact information but conspicuously leaves out her young age.

Annie, I wouldn't want an 11-year-old taking care of my child, and I'm pretty sure if her parents knew, they wouldn't be in a rush to request her services. I think this flyer is deceptive, and I'm not sure it's OK to just keep my nose out of it?

Battling Baby-sitting Blues in the Southeast

Dear Battling: You might mention to the girl's parents that such flyers can be dangerous should one fall into the hands of a person older than the age would make it worse. Beyond that, stay out of it. Any potential child should ask your niece's address before proceeding to meet her.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Mary Sauer, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other stateside syndicates.

Why does South suffer so? The Times-Picayune, New Orleans

Stroke is a big killer in this country — only heart disease and cancer claim more lives — but it's not an indiscriminate one: Southerners make up a disproportionate number of stroke deaths.

A national study presented at the International Stroke Conference in Birmingham, Ala., revealed striking regional and racial disparities. White people who live in the South are 29 percent more likely to die of a stroke than white Americans who live elsewhere. The difference is even greater for African-Americans who live in the South: they are 51 percent more likely to die of a stroke than their counterparts in other regions.

Unfortunately, the study doesn't shed any light on why living in the South increases the risk of stroke death, although diet and exercise habits could have something to do with it. ...

Researchers need to figure out precisely why Southerners are more likely to succumb to strokes, but in the meantime, Southerners, both black and white, need to understand this killer and what to do when it strikes.

Liberty valued when issue is The Des Moines (Iowa) Register

According to a recent opinion poll, many American high school students are OK with the idea that the government should be able to approve news stories before they are published in the newspaper. Some are shocked by this, but it's nothing new, and it's probably not all that surprising if you think about it.

For many years have found a sizable percentage of Americans — young and old — ambivalent about the free-press protections guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Some accuse schools of failing to teach kids about these things.

But whereas facts about the Constitution can be taught, a passionate belief in the principles enumerated in the Bill of Rights comes through experience with the consequences of authoritarian governments. ...

The best route to appreciation of liberty is to understand how you might be personally affected by losing it. Young people might answer "yes" to an abstract question about the First Amendment.

But the poll also showed that polled students should be free to express unpopular opinions. That's a form of free expression they know — and care — about.

Wrong to single out smokers Observer-Dispatch, Utica, N.Y.

Quitting time has taken on a new meaning at one Midwestern company. On Jan. 1, Weyco Inc.'s health benefits administrator, went smoke free. Good news for employees' health.

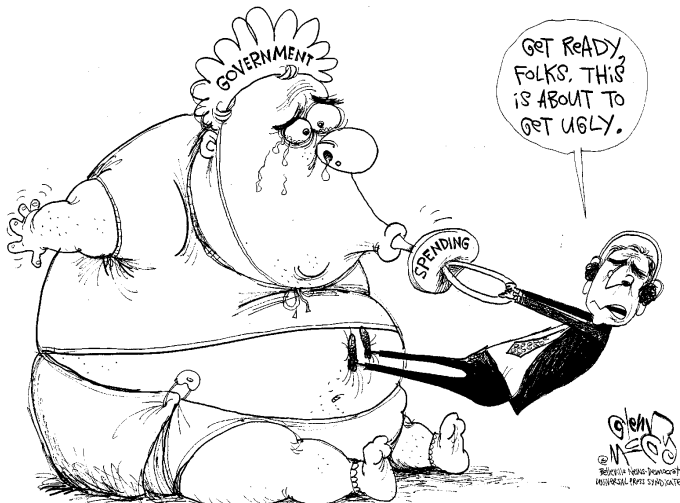
But this no-smoking policy goes way beyond the office door.

Employees who smoke, even at home, will be fired. Bad news for employees' rights.

Weyco's 200 employees were fired last month for refusing to take a test to determine if they had been smoking. The company now performs random testing to ensure compliance with its policy.

Yes, smoking causes health problems. But so does obesity. So does unsafe sex. And so can downhill skiing, sky diving, dune bugging, and the like. It's up to you and your home's gatekeeper and cleaning out your home's gutters.

Which ones should get you fired? Exact-



ly how much of what you do should your employer control? ...

But Weyco President Howard Weyers' attempt to dictate his employees off-work behavior is disturbing, particularly because it's perfectly legal. Michigan is one of 29 states that have so-called "at-will" employment laws. That means employees can be fired for virtually any reason or no reason at all.

Legal scholars say the only reason state Legislatures don't put a stop to at-will laws is there is no strong lobbying effort to get it done. Maybe this will light a fire under some people. It should.

Budget week on the weakest The Anniston (Ala.) Star

The rules still apply: we can't fund a war, secure the nation in a post-Sept. 11 world, hand out tax cuts that favor high-income brackets and stay out of the red. Something must give, and it looks like the "least of these" are the ones who will be shortchanged if President Bush gets his way.

Cuts to programs for the poor are in vogue. The Department of Housing and Urban Development loses 11.5 percent from last year's budget. Cities and counties will feel the pinch as community development assistance is trimmed by 4.5 percent. The loss of \$45 billion in Medicaid will hurt states, forcing them to pick up more of the medical bill for poor residents. The president also proposes cutting \$1.1 billion from the food stamp budget. ...

Speaking Monday, the president said his "is a budget that sets priorities." A president whose speeches are richly flavored with words urging compassion and care for the needy can set better priorities.

Death-benefits hike was due The Times Herald-Record, Middletown, N.Y.

Amid all the debate over the war in Iraq and President Bush's handling of it, there is one thing on which most Americans would probably agree: Up to now, the government has been inexcusably stingy in compensating the families of U.S. servicemen and -women who died fighting that war.

Current law provides for a \$12,420 death benefit to a surviving spouse or family of a servicemember who dies in a combat area.

This is better than the \$6,000 death benefit that prevailed until 2003, but even with other benefits available to surviving families, it is hardly appropriate recompense for those whose loved ones make the greatest sacrifice.

In fact, at their time of greatest loss, the current benefit would barely cover a family's burial expenses, something the government does not do. ...

The president has proposed rectifying the situation by significantly expending death benefits to those who die or are killed in a combat zone. Congress is not only in agreement, many members think the president's proposal should be extended to all members of the armed forces, whether they die in a war zone or not.

Indeed, generosity should prevail. ... The president is right to recommend this change in death benefits. Congress, in a display of nonpartisan national gratitude, should make it even more generous by granting it to all men and women in uniform.

Trains should run safely The Sun News, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

For almost half a century, railroads have been the slighted child of the nation's transportation network, back-seated by a coast-to-coast interstate road system and commercial jet service.

Very little attention has been paid to railroads, despite that they remain the transportation lifeblood for many industries across the country.

Last month's awful train collision in Graniteville (S.C.) may have opened some eyes. A moving train hit a parked train and released a plume of chlorine gas on unsuspecting residents. It was the nation's worst chemical spill since 1978. Nine people died and 550 were injured, while some 5,400 residents were evacuated for several days.

Most experts say electronic switching devices, rather than the manual switches still in use, might have prevented the wreck. ... Our railway system is outdated, much of it running on a technology that is decades old. The demise of passenger service, save for limited Amtrak runs, has diverted all

sense of urgency from making railroads safe. Many tracks and switching stations are worn and vulnerable.

The nation has an obligation to make sure railroads get the same attention as other forms of transportation.

U.S. can aid Mideast peace The Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel

During his first term, President Bush's administration often took a hands-off approach to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Finally, and fortunately, that is changing.

Mr. Bush has invited Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to the White House for separate meetings. And new Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a statement about the administration's foreign-policy priorities for the new term by meeting with Mr. Sharon and Mr. Abbas during her first trip overseas. ...

No matter how dedicated Mr. Sharon and Mr. Abbas might be to peace, they are bound to run into roadblocks. By remaining engaged with the United States can help them reach their elusive but essential goal.

More cleanup, less court time The Daily News, Longview, Wash.

Washington's battle to keep the federal government from turning the Hanford nuclear reservation into a toxic waste dump received a legal boost recently. U.S. District Judge Alan McDonald of Yakima barred the shipment of low-level radioactive waste — contaminated clothing and equipment known as transuranic waste — to Hanford unless it meets strict storage requirements set by the state.

The ruling is welcome, but it hardly qualifies as a big victory in Washington's long-running effort to force the federal government to keep its promises. And it could be temporary, should the U.S. Department of Energy pursue and win a reversal.

Our hope is that the DOE will let the federal judge's decision stand. Too many tax dollars already have been wasted on this and two other ongoing lawsuits — dollars that ought to have been applied to the cleanup.

YOUR MONEY

Assess life-insurance needs before separation

BY MITCH SWANDA

Special to Stars and Stripes

As most servicemembers know, separating from the military is more complicated than trading in camos for khakis. Transitioning to the civilian world can be a challenge, but it also can be an opportunity to revisit your plan to build financial security for the future. If separation is in your sights, don't overlook the need to replace one of the most important benefits you receive in the military — life insurance.

While on active duty, you are covered by Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), which provides \$250,000 of life insurance coverage for you and the option to purchase \$100,000 coverage on your spouse. Since SGLI coverage does not extend beyond your military service, it's important to start shopping for a replacement life insurance policy at least three months before your separation date to ensure your loved ones remain protected.

One option is to convert your SGLI policy to five-year renewable term coverage with Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI), which will provide coverage up to \$250,000.

While some people, particularly those in poor health, may find VGLI coverage to be a good value, those who are healthy may find that VGLI costs are high when compared with a commercial life insurance policy.

If you choose to explore life insurance options with other insurers, the first step is to determine how much coverage is right for you. Consider the following key areas:

Coverage for you

A general rule of thumb is that adequate life insurance protection should cover seven to 10 times your annual income, though more thorough calculations are recommended before purchasing a policy. Speaking with an insurance professional or financial advisor will help you estimate what immediate and ongoing expenses your family would have to cover if your income were lost.

A professional also can guide you in deciding whether a "term" or "permanent" life insurance policy best suits your goals. If you are a single adult with no dependents and no debt, you may discover that your best option is to forgo life insurance altogether.

Coverage for spouses

Even if your spouse doesn't earn an income, he or she is an important part of your family's financial security. The monetary cost of replacing household contributions such as child care, meal

Two types of coverage

Term insurance: Term insurance is similar to what you currently have through SGLI, although SGLI is only in force while you are on active duty. The policy amount is paid to your beneficiaries upon your death. This is known as a "death benefit." Coverage is for a contracted period or term; usually a specified number of years, or up to a specified age. Generally, term insurance gives you the largest immediate death benefit for the lowest premium dollar.

Permanent insurance: Within the framework of permanent insurance are Whole Life, Universal Life and Variable Universal Life. These types of policies are known as "cash value" insurance, where a portion of your premium goes into a cash fund that may grow every year on a tax-deferred basis. Upon your death, your beneficiaries receive the death benefit, which may be larger than the original policy amount. Premiums for permanent insurance are normally higher than those for term insurance.

Source: USAA

preparation and household tasks would be significant, and could be offset by even a minimal life insurance policy.

Coverage for children

The military began offering free coverage for servicemembers' children under SGLI in 2001. To replace this coverage, you may want to consider adding a "child rider" to your new policy. A child rider provides coverage for your children while they are dependent on you, and guarantees they will have the op-



Photos courtesy of USAA

Above: Servicemembers separating from the military have life insurance options available depending on personal needs. A "child rider" will cover children while they are dependents. **Below:** Coverage is available for both you and your spouse, even if your spouse does not earn an income.

tion of purchasing their own policies when they reach age 25, regardless of their health at that time.

Replacing DIC

In addition to SGLI, servicemembers also receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) coverage through the military. DIC is designed to assist surviving spouses and dependents.

death results from service-connected events while on active duty.

Depending on your salary and number of dependents, DIC can provide a significant monthly income over and above the lump sum from SGLI. Since DIC benefits are not available to you upon leaving the military (unless payments had already started prior to separation), you'll want to fac-

tor this potential income into your new life insurance policy.

Next, be sure to comparison shop your policy to help ensure you obtain the best product and price. Establishing life insurance coverage can be the beginning of a long-term relationship with the insurance company you choose, which means that selecting the right insurer is as important as purchasing the right type and level of coverage. Look for a company with excellent financial strength (measured by ratings agencies such as A.M. Best Company) and a track record of fair claims handling.

If you decide to purchase a new policy, apply before your separation date because it can take up to two months to underwrite a life insurance policy. And be sure not to cancel SGLI until the new policy has been issued and the first premium has been paid. Life insurance medical exams can sometimes uncover an unknown medical condition that could affect your insurability with a new provider.

Taking the time now to weigh your life insurance options carefully can help ensure financial peace of mind as you begin your civilian life.

Mitch Swanda is a salaried certified financial planner practitioner with USAA Financial Planning Services, one of the USAA family of companies. USAA is a diversified insurance and financial services organization that has served the military community since 1922. Swanda also served six years on active duty in the U.S. Navy.



YOUR MONEY

Trading debt won't wipe slate clean

Q: My wife and I have a combined income of about \$90,000, but over the four years we've been married we managed to pile up \$30,000 in credit card debt. Some of the money was used for emergencies and to help my sick mother, but most of the debt came from careless spending.

Recently, my mother died here in the mid-1990s in a nursing home and thought we should live there rather than pay rent. Should we take out a mortgage on the home to pay off all our debt? We don't plan to live there permanently, because we want to start a family soon and live in a better area. I know the mortgage would give us a clean slate, but is it the wise thing to do?

A: Good for you for even asking the question. Many people, understanding by lenders, think using home equity to pay credit cards is a great idea. These folks typically have no idea what they're doing to themselves.

The first misconception is that trading one debt for another creates, as you put it, a "clean slate." You may have traded a high-rate, non-deductible debt for a lower-rate, deductible one, but

you still owe the money. If you take out the mortgage, you'll have reduced your potential profit when you sell the home.

But even more worrisome is that such home-trading doesn't really address the spending problem that got you into credit card debt in the first place. A study by Britain Associates in the mid-1990s found that most people who paid off credit cards with home-equity lending quickly ran up new credit card debt.

Some people are so addicted to this cheap, easy form of cash that they repeatedly drain off any appreciation their homes experience, destroying their own wealth and leaving themselves with no financial cushion in an emergency.

Let's hope you'll be smarter than that. Make the mortgage a one-time bailout, and commit yourself to living within your means. (You can fight temptation to use plastic by freezing your cards in a block of ice.) Build up a cash emergency fund so you're not tempted to charge poorly

predictable life events, such as car and home repairs. And thank your mother for her help in getting you started down a much more sensible road.

If by the way, you want to consult a tax pro before you sell. If you've lived in the house less than two years, the difference between what your moon paid for the house and the ultimate sale price could be taxed as a capital gain.

Q: Thank you for spreading the word that closing credit card accounts can't help your credit score and may hurt it.

I'm a mortgage-lending professional who has seen countless buyers going through the full underwriting process, only to be turned down because their scores dropped between the time they applied and the time the lenders made their decisions.

The drops are mainly resulted from closed credit cards. Let me add that many of these folks got the advice to close the accounts from their real estate agents. In other cases, people

were urged to give new vehicles back to the lenders as a way of reducing their debt ratios (their debt payments as a proportion of their income).

Please let your readers know that giving a car back this way is called a voluntary repossession, which is just as bad as an involuntary repossession. The effect on your credit is the same, and you typically still owe the auto lender money even after the car is turned in.

As you've pointed out, a little knowledge is truly a dangerous thing, and consumers shouldn't assume that their real estate agents are experts on the mortgage-lending process.

It's true that debt-to-income ratios are extremely important in mortgage-lending decisions, but trying to make debts "disappear" through voluntary repossessions is just nuts. Repossessions — like foreclosures, collection actions and bankruptcies — are serious black marks that will devastate your credit score.

Closing credit card accounts typically won't ding your score nearly as much, but it may not take much to lose out on a mortgage deal — particularly if your scores weren't that high before you closed the accounts.

The best course for mortgage applicants is to leave well enough alone — don't apply for any other new credit in the months before seeking a home loan, and don't close any existing accounts you do so as a condition of the loan.

Liz Pulliam Weston is the author of "Your Credit Score: How to Fix, Improve and Protect the 3-Digit Number That Shapes Your Financial Future." She can be reached at lpulliam@weston.com. Her columns for Money Talk can be submitted to her at 3940 Laurel Canyon Blvd., No. 238, Studio City, CA 91604, or via her Web site, www.lizweston.com. She regrets that she cannot respond personally to queries.

GM hopes safety sells

By ED BLAZINA
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

For years, car features have been moving more toward James Bond and Batman than toward Henry Ford.

Pricey options such as navigation systems and rear-seat DVD players are becoming as commonplace as power windows, air conditioning and rear-window defoggers a decade or so ago.

Now, General Motors Corp. is trying to follow another emerging trend: safety sells. The world's largest automobile manufacturer last week kicked off a national advertising campaign to announce it would be making its OnStar communications system and its StabilityTrac road control system standard equipment on all of its vehicles by 2010.

Although some car experts would quibble about OnStar, GM is pushing both products as safety features that will become as indispensable as seat belts and air bags.

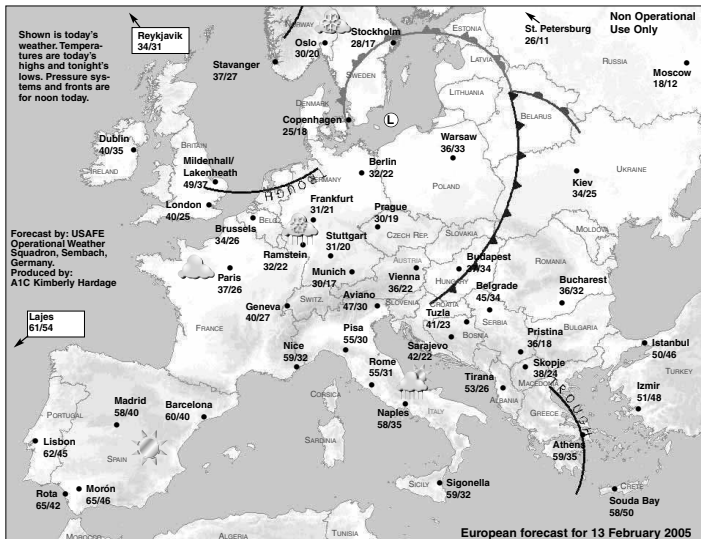
That marketing strategy is seen as the company's attempt to distinguish itself from other manufacturers and develop additional revenue streams through monthly fees attached to OnStar after a free introductory year.

GM's push is not all that surprising. Because of improvements in the reliability of all cars, consumers increasingly are buying vehicles based on other amenities — creature comforts such as cup holders and sound systems or safety elements such as side air bags and sensors to warn drivers they are about to back into a utility pole or another car.

| FRIDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|---------|------|------|---------|-------|
| INDEXES | | | | | | | | | |
| 52-week | Low | High | Name | Last | Net Chg | % | YTD | 52-week | Low |
| 17,818.3 | 9,768.40 | 18,100.00 | Dow Jones Industrial | 10,759.01 | +64.08 | +0.6 | +1.1 | +1.8 | |
| 3,633.96 | 2,743.46 | 3,650.00 | Dow Jones Transportation | 3,613.03 | +45.88 | +1.3 | +4.9 | +23.88 | |
| 584.26 | 259.88 | 590.00 | Dow Jones Utilities | 252.88 | +0.89 | +0.3 | +0.5 | +0.37 | |
| 7,117.8 | 6,211.13 | 7,150.00 | S&P 500 | 7,121.54 | +59.39 | +0.8 | +1.6 | +0.52 | |
| 1,406.26 | 1,135.74 | 1,420.00 | Amex Index | 1,401.10 | +11.10 | +0.8 | +7.5 | +236.39 | |
| 2,156.18 | 1,750.82 | 2,180.00 | Nasdaq Composite | 1,775.68 | +25.35 | +1.5 | +4.4 | +1.12 | |
| 1,217.99 | 1,060.72 | 1,240.00 | S&P 500 | 1,205.30 | +46.29 | +3.9 | +5.5 | +5.19 | |
| 656.99 | 548.29 | 670.00 | Russell 2000 | 602.66 | +16.73 | +2.8 | +1.0 | +0.82 | |
| 656.11 | 525.99 | 670.00 | Russell 2000 | 634.76 | +17.57 | +2.7 | +5.8 | +48.28 | |
| 12,835.48 | 10,358.52 | 13,000.00 | Dow Jones S&P 500 | 11,875.48 | +68.24 | +0.6 | +7.5 | +80 | +6.28 |

| FRIDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|---------|------|------|---------|-------|
| INDEXES | | | | | | | | | |
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| 7,117.8 | 6,211.13 | 7,150.00 | S&P 500 | 7,121.54 | +59.39 | +0.8 | +1.6 | +0.52 | |
| 1,406.26 | 1,135.74 | 1,420.00 | Amex Index | 1,401.10 | +11.10 | +0.8 | +7.5 | +236.39 | |
| 2,156.18 | 1,750.82 | 2,180.00 | Nasdaq Composite | 1,775.68 | +25.35 | +1.5 | +4.4 | +1.12 | |
| 1,217.99 | 1,060.72 | 1,240.00 | S&P 500 | 1,205.30 | +46.29 | +3.9 | +5.5 | +5.19 | |
| 656.99 | 548.29 | 670.00 | Russell 2000 | 602.66 | +16.73 | +2.8 | +1.0 | +0.82 | |
| 656.11 | 525.99 | 670.00 | Russell 2000 | 634.76 | +17.57 | +2.7 | +5.8 | +48.28 | |
| 12,835.48 | 10,358.52 | 13,000.00 | Dow Jones S&P 500 | 11,875.48 | +68.24 | +0.6 | +7.5 | +80 | +6.28 |

| EXCHANGE RATES | |
|--|-----------|
| Military rates | |
| Euro costs (Feb. 14) | \$1.3193 |
| Dollar buys (Feb. 14) | +0.7588 |
| British pound (Feb. 14) | +0.92 |
| Japanese yen (Feb. 14) | +0.0030 |
| South Korean won (Feb. 12) | +1,009.00 |
| Commercial rates | |
| Bahrain (Dinar) | +3.377 |
| British pound | +0.7588 |
| Canada (Dollar) | +1.2935 |
| Denmark (Krone) | +5.7878 |
| Egypt (Pound) | +1.2935 |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | +7.952 |
| Hungary (Forint) | +109.30 |
| Iceland (Krona) | +62.815 |
| Israel (Shekel) | +4.754 |
| Japan (Yen) | +0.0076 |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | +0.7588 |
| Norway (Krone) | +5.6555 |
| Philippines (Peso) | +2.75 |
| Singapore (Dollar) | +1.6481 |
| South Korea (Won) | +1,032.30 |
| Switzerland (Franc) | +0.7588 |
| Thailand (Baht) | +38.52 |
| Turkey (New Lira) | +0.0066 |
| (Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banks in facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For non-local currency exchange rates see purchasing British pounds in Germany.) | |



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Cloudy with windy conditions and snow in the afternoon. Highs in the mid 30s. Sunday lows in the mid to upper 20s.

Britain, Ireland: Partly to mostly cloudy with windy conditions and isolated rain and snowshowers. Highs in the 40s. Sunday lows in the mid 20s to mid-30s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Mostly cloudy with rain and snow mix becoming snow in the evening. Highs in the low 40s. Sunday lows in the low 20s.

France: Cloudy and windy with isolated snowshowers in the north. Highs in the 30s. Sunday lows in the 20s. Mostly sunny to partly cloudy in the south. Highs in the upper 50s. Sunday lows in the lower 30s.

Northern Germany: Cloudy with snowshowers. Highs in the 30s. Sunday lows in the 20s.

Southern Germany: Cloudy with rain and snow mix becoming snowshowers in the afternoon. Highs in the low 30s. Sunday lows in the teens to lower 20s.

Hungary: Cloudy with rain and snow mix. Highs in the upper 30s. Sunday lows in the low 30s.

Northern Italy: Mostly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the upper 40s to mid 50s. Sunday lows in the lower 30s.

Southern Italy: Cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Highs in the upper 50s. Sunday lows in the low to mid 30s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy with rainshowers in the afternoon. Highs in the mid 30s. Sunday lows in the teens.

Norway: Cloudy with snowshowers. Highs in the 30s. Sunday lows in the 20s.

Portugal, Spain: Sunny. Highs in the mid 50s to mid 60s. Sunday lows in the 40s.

Turkey: Partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers. Partly cloudy with isolated snowshowers inland. Highs in the lower 50s with low 30s inland. Sunday lows in the 40s with upper 20s inland.

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAF Operational Weather Squadron home page at:
<https://ows.sembach.af.mil>
<http://ows.public.sembach.af.mil>

SUN & MOON

| | Today | Tomorrow |
|---------------------|----------|----------|
| Sunrise (Baghdad) | 6:49A.M. | 6:38A.M. |
| Sunrise (Frankfurt) | 7:42A.M. | 7:39A.M. |
| Sunset (Baghdad) | 5:46P.M. | 5:47P.M. |
| Sunset (Frankfurt) | 5:41P.M. | 5:43P.M. |

New moon First qtr. Full moon Last qtr.

LEBIO

| AFRICA | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|-----------|----|----|
| | HI | LO | | HI | LO |
| Cape Town | 81 | 62 | Mogadishu | 86 | 7 |
| Dakar | 73 | 64 | Nairobi | 82 | 5 |
| Freetown | 87 | 76 | Rabat | 66 | 4 |

THE WORLD

| | HI | LO | | HI | LO |
|-----------|----|----|-------------|----|----|
| Amsterdam | 34 | 27 | Manila | 87 | 71 |
| Bahrain | 69 | 51 | Mexico City | 74 | 44 |
| Beijing | 42 | 26 | Montreal | 26 | 26 |
| Beirut | 55 | 46 | Riyadh | 71 | 44 |
| Bermuda | 59 | 55 | Rio de Jan | 84 | 74 |
| Caracas | 86 | 73 | Seoul | 42 | 23 |
| Helsinki | 22 | 14 | Sofia | 38 | 23 |
| Hong Kong | 68 | 64 | Sydney | 76 | 69 |
| Lisbon | 61 | 44 | Tokyo | 49 | 33 |

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

[illegible]

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time

Bands separate high temperature zones for the day.

| | | | | | | |
|-----|----|------|---------------|----|----|-------|
| 35 | 50 | Rain | San Angelo | 71 | 42 | Pdicy |
| 50 | 50 | Rain | San Antonio | 78 | 48 | Pdicy |
| 51 | 50 | Rain | San Antonio | 78 | 48 | Pdicy |
| 52 | 50 | Rain | San Diego | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 53 | 50 | Rain | San Francisco | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 54 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 55 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 56 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 57 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 58 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
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| 60 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 61 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
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| 63 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 64 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 65 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 66 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 67 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 68 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 69 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 70 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 71 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 72 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 73 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 74 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 75 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 76 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
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| 79 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 80 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
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| 84 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 85 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 86 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 87 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 88 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 89 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 90 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
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| 92 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 93 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 94 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 95 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 96 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 97 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 98 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 99 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |
| 100 | 50 | Rain | San Jose | 58 | 38 | Pdicy |

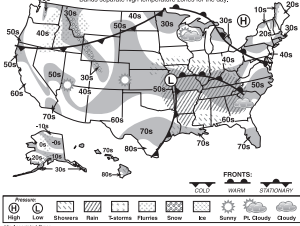
Legend:

- Fronts: Cold, Warm, Stationary, Occluded
- High/Low: High, Low
- Weather: High, Low, Showers, Rain, Sleet, Hail, Snow, Ice, Sunny, Pt. Cloudy, Cloudy

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time

Bands separate high temperature zones for the disc



Pressure: ☐ H ☐ L ☐

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Start: Yanks add Pavano, Wright, Johnson to rotation

START, FROM BACK PAGE

"I call it the new Mets because this organization is going to a different direction, the right direction, the direction of winning," Beltran said.

Across town, the Yankees were still stunned from last October, when they not only lost to Boston in the AL championship series but became the first team in major league history to take a 3-0 lead in a best-of-seven series and lose.

Revamping their shaky starting staff, New York signed free agents Carl Pavano and Jaret Wright, then acquired five-time Cy Young Award winner Randy Johnson from Arizona for Javier Vazquez, minor leaguers and \$10 million.

In his first day in town, the Big Unit got into a confrontation with a television cameraman following him in the street. Johnson apologized the next day, but the tension will only increase when the games start for real and owner George Steinbrenner starts belaboring on the back pages.

"I know that the demands will be a little higher," Johnson said. "If I go to a bad movie and the actor gets paid \$20 million, I'm thinking 'Wow, what was that all about?'"

Boston, trying to win back-to-back titles for the first time since 1915-16, added David Wells and Matt Clement to replace Martinez and Derek Lowe, who signed with Los Angeles, and stole shortstop Edgar Renteria from St. Louis. The Dodgers brought in outfielder J.D. Drew and shipped Shawn Green to Arizona, trying to rebound from a 111-loss season. Under new owner-

ership, the Diamondbacks spent \$45 million on third baseman Troy Glaus and \$33 million on pitcher Russ Ortiz.

Seattle, which lost 99 games, took first baseman Richie Sexson from the Diamondbacks for \$50 million and third baseman Adrian Beltré from the Dodgers with a \$64 million deal.

Anaheim, which tasted success when it won the 2002 World Series, also made some moves. Owner Arte Moreno renamed the franchise the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, even though it's about 30 miles from Tinseltown, and brought in shortstop Orlando Cabrera and outfielder Steve Finley.

Florida, coming off the 2003 World Series title, missed the playoffs last year and went into the market to sign first baseman Carlos Delgado and pitcher Al Leiter.

Sammy Sosa was another big name to move, accepting a trade to the Baltimore Orioles from the Chicago Cubs, where he had worn out his welcome after belting early on the last day of last season.

Even with Sosa, it's hard to envision the Orioles overtaking New York and Boston in the big-money AL East.

"All the problems I had in Chicago, it's in the past. What happened, happened," Sosa said. "Just like a marriage, sometimes you just have to get a divorce. We're all smart guys. We know it was time to move on."

Roger Clemens, 42, coming off his record seventh Cy Young Award, made news by staying put. After saying for the second straight offseason that he intended to retire, he signed an \$18 million contract with Houston, the highest salary for a pitcher in baseball history. The Rocket helped the Astros come within a game of their first World Series appearance and remembered being honored at halftime of a Houston Texans game in November.

"You got 60,000 people chanting, 'One more year!' That stuck with me," he said.

Bonds, who won his seventh NL MVP Award last year and raised his home-run total to 73, will be missing from the field for much of spring training, following knee surgery last month. The San Francisco Giants expect him to be ready for Opening Day, when he

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American League

| TEAM | PITCHERS/ CATCHERS | POSITION PLAYERS | FULL SQUAD WORKOUT |
|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Angels | Feb. 16/17 | Feb. 21 | Feb. 22 |
| Orioles | 19/21 | 23 | 25 |
| Red Sox | 17/18 | 21 | 22 |
| White Sox | 16/17 | 21 | 22 |
| Indians | 17/19 | 22 | 24 |
| Tigers | 17/18 | 21 | 22 |
| Royals | 19/20 | 24 | 25 |
| Twins | 20/21 | 25 | 26 |
| Yankees | 15/17 | 20 | 22 |
| Athletics | 19/20 | 23 | 24 |
| Mariners | 16/17 | 21 | 22 |
| Devil Rays | 17/18 | 22 | 23 |
| Rangers | 16/17 | 21 | 22 |
| Blue Jays | 19/20 | 24 | 25 |

SOURCE: Major League Baseball

National League

| TEAM | PITCHERS/ CATCHERS | POSITION PLAYERS | FULL SQUAD WORKOUT |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Diamondbacks | Feb. 16/17 | Feb. 21 | Feb. 22 |
| Braves | 17/18 | 22 | 23 |
| Cubs | 16/17 | 21 | 22 |
| Reds | 15/17 | 21 | 22 |
| Rockies | 17/18 | 22 | 24 |
| Marlins | 17/19 | 20 | 22 |
| Astros | 17/18 | 23 | 24 |
| Dodgers | 18/19 | 23 | 24 |
| Brewers | 19/21 | 25 | 27 |
| Mets | 16/18 | 21 | 23 |
| Phillies | 17/17 | 22 | 22 |
| Pirates | 17/18 | 22 | 23 |
| Cardinals | 18/19 | 22 | 23 |
| Padres | 18/19 | 23 | 24 |
| Giants | 17/18 | 22 | 23 |
| Nationals | 15/17 | 20 | 22 |

AP



After their ALCS collapse, the Yankees acquired five-time Cy Young winner Randy Johnson.

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Time running out

Lockout could become strike if NHL imposes salary cap plan

BY IRA PODELL
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Instead of celebrating All-Star weekend in Atlanta, the NHL is staring at a deadline that will spell doom for the season.

If there's no agreement between the league and the players' associations before the end of the weekend, commissioner Gary Bettman is expected to cancel a season that never started — a season that would be at the All-Star break by now if it had.

"I don't know what he's waiting for," Los Angeles center Sean Avery said.

The league and the players' association kept to their word Friday and didn't reach out to the other side.

Representatives from several teams told The Associated Press on Friday they had not yet been given word or warning from the NHL to get ready for the cancellation of the season. They do expect notification before such action is taken.

Bettman already has the authority to cancel the season. He hoped to make a deal this weekend that would allow for a 28-game schedule and a full 16-team postseason.

So the hockey world keeps waiting — nothing new at all in the five-month lockout that so far has wiped out 824 of the 1,230 regular-season games. That number won't officially grow before Tuesday because of the All-Star break.

But this weekend will be anything but joyous. Barring a radical change in the philosophical positions of the sides regarding a salary cap, no deal will be reached and no hockey will be played.

The NHL then would gain the distinction of being the first



Motor City's Sean Avery skates with the puck against Port Huron in a United Hockey League game Friday night. Avery, who plays for the Los Angeles Kings, scored two goals as the Mechanics won 3-2.

major North American sports league to miss an entire season because of a labor dispute.

And if the atmosphere doesn't improve, the stalemate could stretch well into next season — that is, if the NHL doesn't impose its salary-cap system through the courts.

If that course is taken, then this season's lockout likely would turn into next season's strike while the NHL tries to reopen with replacement players.

"Our position has been very consistent throughout that the possibility of unilateral implementation and the use of replacement players, potentially, next season, was not something that we were planning and not something that we were focused on," NHL chief legal officer Bill Daly said Thursday. "Our 100 percent focus was on negotiating a new agreement."

But Daly said many options would have to be considered if a negotiated deal can't be reached.

Players' association senior director Ted Saskin declined comment on potential legal issues.

More than half of the 700-plus NHL players have spent at least part of this season in European leagues, but they could have several options next season — go overseas or possibly elect to cross the line to play in the new-look NHL, which would have a link between league revenue and player costs.

With no season or playoffs to save, the next deadline would be in June when the NHL usually holds its entry draft. If there isn't a collective bargaining agreement in place, there can't be a draft.

Since the prospect of losing a season wasn't enough to force anyone to give in on the critical issue of cost certainty, then it's hard to imagine the draft would push the NHL or the players' association over the edge, either.

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Raich wins slalom as championships enter last weekend

BY ANDREW DAMPF
The Associated Press

BORMIO, Italy — Austria's Benjamin Raich put together two steady runs and won the slalom race Saturday for his fourth medal of the Alpine World Ski Championships, moving ahead of Bode Miller on the medals table.

Raich also won gold in last week's combined race, silver in the giant slalom and even claimed a surprise bronze in the super-G.

Miller straddled a gate midway through his second run and fell, and did not finish. In the two races Miller did complete during these championships, the American won gold in the super-G and downhill.

Saturday's race concluded the individual portion of the championships. Only Sunday's team event, in which Raich and Miller were expected to participate, remained.

"It was a great day, a good slalom, perfect," said Raich, who is second to Miller in this season's overall World Cup standings.

"This is crazy, I can't believe it."

Raich has been suffering from the same flu that has affected several other skiers here.

"I'm too weak to properly enjoy it," he said. "This victory is giving me my strength back, though."

Leading after the first leg, Raich covered the Stelvio course in a two-run combined time of 1 minute 34 seconds.

Fellow Austrian Rainer Schoenfelder took the silver medal, finishing 0.24 seconds behind.

Local favorite Giorgio Rocca of Italy was third, 0.74 back, for his second medal here after also taking bronze in the combined.

Raich, who leads this season's World Cup slalom ranks, set up his victory with a superb first run.

"Having a low bib number helped me," Raich said of the first leg, "because the slope deteriorated almost immediately in certain stretches."

Raich's fellow Austrian, Manfred Pranger, second after the first run, fell just a few gates into his second leg, opening the way for Raich to cruise to victory.

Raich won the opening slalom this season in Beaver Creek, Colo., on Dec. 5 and was the bronze medalist in the event in the 2002 Olympics. He finished fourth in the slalom in the 2003 worlds and won silver in the 2001 edition.

In sharp contrast to Miller's make-or-break style, Raich has reached the upper echelon of skiing this season by posting consistently high results. While he only races select downhills, Raich — like Miller — is capable of skiing each event.

His versatility was on display last week when he won the combined, considered by many experts as the toughest test in ski-



Double gold medalist Bode Miller stands along the slalom course after crashing out in the second run of Saturday's race in the Alpine World Ski Championships.

ing, consisting of one downhill run and two slalom legs.

Miller, who leads Raich 1,093 points to 998 in the overall World Cup standings, has only completed one of eight slaloms this season, winning the night race in Sestriere, Italy in early December.

He was attempting to become the first man to win in all five disciplines in the world championships after taking the giant slalom and combined titles in 2003 and the two speed titles here last week.

Miller switched ski brands before this season and has improved in the speed races while struggling in slalom, once a specialty.

Several top skiers did not finish their first runs Saturday, including defending world champion Ivica Kostelic of Croatia, who missed a gate near the end of his leg.

Finland's Kalle Palander, the 1999 slalom world champion, went out in the same section as Kostelic after posting split times that would have placed him among the leaders.

Immediately after Palander's run, course workers spent several minutes rearranging the snow where he and Kostelic went out.

Palander was fuming after his exit, thrashing gates with one of his poles in frustration.

"I am really angry at the depression right after that gate where I skied out," Palander said. Kostelic said: "I cannot figure out why they did not decide to water it."

Despite struggles, Melo shows signs of hope

BY EDDIE PELLIS

The Associated Press

DENVER—There are no bootleg videotapes of Carmelo Anthony signing autographs, no police reports documenting him reading books to schoolchildren, no breathless eyewitness retellings of him raising money for charity.

Those are the kinds of things the second-year Denver Nuggets star spends a lot of time doing, but gets very little attention for these days. They are the kinds of things he hopes he's remembered for off the floor once his career hits full bloom.

This season has been mostly a struggle for the 20-year-old.

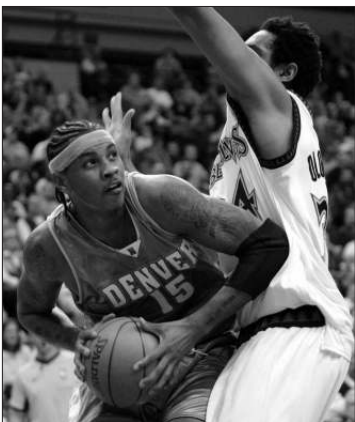
Three coaches, myriad nagging injuries, 40 percent shooting and a handful of embarrassing moments have a way of wearing you down.

At one point earlier in the season, Anthony tried to separate himself from his troubles by pretty much ignoring anyone who wanted to point them out. But with the All-Star Game here next weekend — Anthony won't play in the game but will be a big part of the festivities — he has abandoned his me-against-the-world attitude and is trying to accentuate the positive.

"You're by yourself. You get lonely. You say, 'Since nobody's with me, forget about them,'" Anthony said. "But then I realized things aren't that bad. I had to change that mentality. Now, I've got to be happy."

Despite his detractors, there are signs Anthony will overcome this trouble — or that maybe he already has.

Jerseys with his name on them accounted for three of the five biggest sellers during the holiday shopping season. At the NBA Store in New York and online, apparel with Anthony's name trailed only that carrying the



Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony (15) drives against Minnesota Timberwolves center Michael Olowokandi on Wednesday. Anthony has a more positive outlook during his second season in the NBA.

names of Tracy McGrady, Shaquille O'Neal and Stephen Marbury.

"A great accomplishment, a great honor," Anthony says. "It shows there are people out there who like me, who care for me."

He recently got engaged to MTV VJ La La Vazquez, who often sits courtside at Denver home games. She, as much as anyone, has helped him come to grips with the trials and travails of being famous.

"You just have to learn not to take things personally," she said.

"You have to realize that you're like everyone else — they have some bad days, some problems. Only when you and them, people see that, and you just have to accept that that's part of the deal."

Anthony is a charity and community workhorse in Denver, a city that has been in search of a sports superstar since John Elway retired from the Broncos six years ago.

Anthony has held Christmas parties for charity. He has a candy bar named for him, and

proceeds from those sales go to charity. He chipped in \$30,000 to buy a specially equipped van for a kid with spina bifida and more than \$200,000 to various nonprofit organizations around Colorado.

He wrote a kid's book, "It's Just the Beginning," to tell his story — a poor kid from inner-city Baltimore growing up, getting a scholarship, winning a national title at Syracuse and making the pros. The list goes on.

"He's from a close-knit community and he appreciates community," said Anthony's agent, Calvin Andrews. "That's one of the first things he did when he got to Denver — he looked at the marketplace to see what efforts he can get behind."

He still has that sweet, soft smile that shows hints of a disarming innocence, something all too uncommon in the NBA these days.

He is not polished and packaged like a LeBron James, the player with whom he'll always be compared. He tells it like it is, does things the way he wants, and while sometimes that makes his agent and friends cringe, it also may explain his immense popularity among fans — many of them young — who buy his jersey and who have made his shoe, the Carmelo 1.5, one of the best sellers as well.

"People love Carmelo because he's a real person, a person who does good things and a person who makes errors," Andrews said. "There may be some negatives in the corporate boardroom. But for the average person who's a fan, they understand where he's coming from."

Since his NBA career began 1½ years ago, Anthony has been coached by Jeff Bzdelick, Michael Cooper and, now, George Karl.

At first, the hiring of Karl, known as a disciplinarian, didn't seem like a fit for Anthony. But

the Nuggets have thrived under the new coach — they won five of their first seven games after his Jan. 28 hiring — and Anthony has improved his shooting to 46 percent in those games.

The basketball part of the equation is the least of his worries.

"That will work itself out," he said. "I know what I'm capable of doing on the court. My fans know. It's going to happen."

Of course, not being able to play in the All-Star Game in his home city is a disappointment. But while others might have taken the snub as an excuse to get out of town for a few days, Anthony insists on being involved and has a two-page itinerary of events to attend.

"He understands why he's not in the All-Star Game, but he's not bummed out at all," Vasquez said. "He's excited for the players who made it. He knows he's going to be there in the future."

Denver is his town now. When he got here and turned the Nuggets into a playoff team in one short season, he got a taste of what it's like to be loved in Colorado. This season, the negatives have come out more than the positives, from Denver's sub-.500 shooting so far to a bar fight in New York to somehow showing up on a DVD that warned witnesses against working with Baltimore police.

Still, kids walk around town wearing their powder-blue No. 15 jerseys, and his face shows up on billboards and TV commercials. A second-half foul on the Nuggets were 3½ games out of the final playoff spot (on Friday) and another trip to the playoffs would be great, though Anthony feels owed about his season. "I know this season started and regardless of how it ends,"

"In my mind, all the positives so far have outweighed the negatives," he said. "Maybe not in everybody's mind, but in my mind, for sure."

Mariners' Sexson cited for driving under influence

The Associated Press

VANCOUVER, Wash. — New Seattle Mariners first baseman Richie Sexson was cited for drunken driving last weekend after being stopped for speeding.

Sexson, who signed a \$50 million, four-year, free-agent contract with Seattle in December, was stopped Feb. 5 near his Clark County home.

Sports briefs

Linda Dozoretz, a spokeswoman for Sexson, confirmed late Friday that he was stopped for speeding and was later "charged with driving under the influence."

Dozoretz said in a statement that Sexson would not be impaired "based on the two Breathalyzer tests he later took." She said she was confident the charges would be amended. Sexson entered a plea of not guilty on Wednesday, according to court records.

Clark County sheriff's Deputy Gregory Chaney said he initially stopped Sexson for speeding, according to two television reports.

The deputy estimated Sexson's speed in

excess of 50 mph in a 35 mph zone.

The deputy said in his report that he suspected Sexson was intoxicated after noticing a "strong odor of intoxicants emitting from the driver's window," and seeing an opened six-pack of beer bottles in the back seat of the car.

According to the report, Sexson refused to take a portable breath test at the scene and then failed a series of field sobriety tests. An hour later, Sexson took two breath tests at the sheriff's office, both times registering below Washington's legal intoxication threshold.

The sheriff's office said in a statement late Friday that Sexson submitted two breath samples and was then cited for DUI, but the statement did not provide the results of those breath tests.

"It is our understanding Richie was originally stopped for driving over the speed limit," Mariners spokesman Tim Hevly said, adding that the team was told Sexson "took and passed two Breathalyzer tests."

A career .271 hitter with 200 home runs, the 30-year-old Sexson injured his left shoulder last season with Arizona and didn't play after May, batting .233 with nine homers and 23 RBIs.

Orioles, Julio reach \$2.5M deal

BALTIMORE — Reliever Jorge Julio agreed to terms on a \$2.5 million, one-year contract with the Baltimore Orioles on Saturday, avoiding salary arbitration.

Julio had 22 saves, 26 chances last season, but lost his job by closing during a rough stretch in September. He finished 2-5 with a 4.57 ERA in 65 games.

The right-hander allowed 13 runs in his last 16 outings, allowing five homers over 15 innings. B.J. Ryan took over as the stopper, although Julio hopes to compete for the job in spring training.

Julio, who made \$380,000 last year, was eligible for arbitration for the first time. He filed for \$2.9 million, and Baltimore proposed \$2.35 million.

Referee in German soccer scandal charged with fraud

BERLIN — The referee who took bribes to fix German soccer games was arrested and charged with fraud Saturday, and investigators said more people and matches could be involved than previously thought.

Robert Hoyzer was charged with eight counts of fraud, prosecutors said. The

25-year-old has admitted rigging four games in return for \$85,000 from a gambling syndicate led by three Croatian brothers, who have been arrested. He tried to manipulate two other games without success, and in one game his help wasn't needed.

Investigators said Hoyzer may not have told them about other matches rigged before 2004. They added he was also arrested because he is considered a flight risk.

Hoyzer has implicated others, and Berlin prosecutors are investigating 25 people, including three other referees and 14 players, on suspicion of fixing at least 10 games, mostly in the lower divisions.

Agassi upset; Roddick advances in SAP
SAN JOSE, Calif. — Seventh-seeded Jürgen Melzer upset No. 2 Andre Agassi 6-3, 6-1 in the quarterfinals of the SAP Open.

Top-seeded Andy Roddick dropped the first set to Thomas Enqvist but recovered to advance with a 3-6, 7-6 (5), 7-5 victory.

Roddick will next face third-seeded Tommy Haas, who beat No. 8 Max Mirnyi. Melzer next faces Cyril Saulnier in the other semifinal match. Saulnier beat No. 4 Vincent Spadea.

Suns can't get past 50 in battle of West's nest

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Seattle SuperSonics are reminding everyone that they're a force in the West, too.

One night after beating Sacramento at home, the Sonics went to Phoenix and knocked off the Suns 113-105 on Friday night.

Ray Allen climbed out of an awful shooting night with 14 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter and Seattle had seven players in double figures in the showdown of division leaders.

Rashard Lewis scored 23 points, going 4-for-7 from three-point range, and Antonio Daniels had 20 in the Sonics' fifth win in a row.

Vladimir Radmanovic added 13, Jerome James and Luke Ridgeway had 12 apiece, and Reggie Evans had 10 points and 11 rebounds.

Seattle improved to 9-2 against the top six teams in the NBA.

"The main thing tonight was to control the tempo and not try to get into a run-and-gun game with this team," Seattle coach Nate McMillan said. "We took our opportunity when we had it to push the ball, but for the most part I thought our halfcourt execution was good. This was a big win."

Amare Stoudemire scored 32 points, and Steve Nash had 25 points and 14 assists for the Suns, who lost for the second time in five games but only the 12th time

all season. Quentin Richardson added 20 points — going 6-for-13 from three-point range — and Shawn Marion 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Nash and Suns coach Mike D'Antoni said the Suns didn't put out the necessary effort.

"We just let our guard down and they took it to us," D'Antoni said. "You can't think that 'Now, we'll turn it on.' We've done that in the past, and tonight we paid for it."

Wizards 94, Clippers 91: Gilbert Arenas scored 41 of his 45 points in the fourth quarter, and Antawn Jamison hit a big three-pointer in the final minute, leading host Washington.

Arenas reached the 30-point mark for the ninth time in 14 games and was again the catalyst in the final period as the Wizards held firm in a tight finish to sweep their four-game home-stand. Jamison then all but settled the matter with a three-point shot that broke a 90-90 tie with 45 seconds remaining.

Rockets 91, Pacers 83: At Indianapolis, Bob Sura scored 17 points and Houston won its sixth straight game, holding Indiana to a single point in the final 7 minutes.

After trailing by 15 points, Reggie Miller rallied to tie it at 82, with Reggie Miller hitting two three-pointers. But the Pacers missed their final 12 shots as the Rockets pulled away in the closing minutes.

Heat 97, Bobcats 87: Shaquille O'Neal had 32 points and 12 rebounds to lead visiting Miami to

its fifth straight victory and ninth in 10 games.

76ers 106, Raptors 91: At Toronto, Allen Iverson had 30 points and eight assists to help Philadelphia end a two-game losing streak.

Kenny Thomas added 21 points and eight rebounds, and rookie Andre Iguodala had 16 points and eight rebounds. Jalen Rose had 23 points for the Raptors.

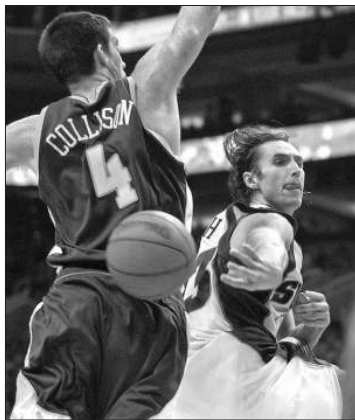
Spurs 101, Nets 91: Tony Parker scored 17 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, and visiting San Antonio took over after Bruce Bowen got New Jersey's Vince Carter so angry that he picked up a second technical foul with 9:45 to go.

Carr, who scored 43 points on 14-for-24 shooting, became so enraged after tangling legs with Bowen after missing a jumper that he screamed at the Spurs forward and walked menacingly toward him with 9:45 left.

Celtics 111, Knicks 94: At Boston, Ricky Davis scored 25 points, Paul Pierce had 17, and Raef LaFrenz added 15 points and 14 rebounds to help Atlantic Division-leading Boston (26-25) move above .500 for the first time since Nov. 12.

New York dropped its 14th game in 16 tries to fall to 3-18 in 2005 and 19-31 overall. Stephen Marbury scored 31 points, his fifth straight game with 30 or more.

Nuggets 106, Cavaliers 101: Little Earl Boykins scored 18 of his 22 points in the second half for visiting Denver to overshadow another Anthony-LeBron James matchup.



Phoenix Suns guard Steve Nash, right, fools Seattle SuperSonics forward Mark Collison with a pass behind his back on Friday night.

Boykins, the Nuggets' pesky 5-foot-5 guard, helped the Nuggets overcome a 35-point performance from James. Last season, Boykins, who twice played with Cleveland, scored 18 points — all in the second half — as the Nuggets spoiled James' home debut as a pro.

Grizzlies 88, Trail Blazers 82: Stoudemire scored 23 points, and Mike Miller added 22 for host Memphis in its third straight victory and third in seven games.

Zach Randolph led the Trail Blazers with 26 points and 12 rebounds.

Hornets 111, Warriors 108:

At New Orleans, Rodney Rogers scored 20 points, and Bostjan Nachbar had 19, leading New Orleans to its 10th victory in 50 games this season.

Derek Fisher led Golden State with 23 points.

Jazz 100, Timberwolves 82: At Salt Lake City, Carlos Boozer answered criticism from Utah owner Larry Miller with 21 points and 11 rebounds, and Andrei Kirilenko had 20 points and 10 rebounds.

Boozer, whose toughness was questioned publicly by Miller earlier in the week, had his 22nd double-double of the season but first in more than two weeks.

Shaq wants to become a team owner — or a federal marshal

BY CHRIS SHERIDAN

The Associated Press

Shaquille O'Neal wants to own a piece of the Orlando Magic, and he'd return to the Los Angeles Lakers with a few conditions —

"\$100 million for two months, tax free, and no practices."

O'Neal was alternately serious and silly earlier this week as he met with reporters in New York prior to the Miami Heat's fourth straight victory, an overtime win

over the Knicks that improved the Eastern Conference's best record to 37-14.

The line about rejoining the Lakers was obviously a joke, but Shaq's tone was serious when he discussed possibly putting together a group of investors to purchase an NBA team.

"And the only team he'd be interested in, O'Neal said, is Orlando. 'It's not that [other teams] don't appeal. It's just that I live in Orlando, my family lives in Orlando and they have a player [Dwight Howard] that's pretty good that we can build the franchise around,'" he said.

The Magic are trying to have a new arena built to replace the TD Waterhouse Center built in 1989, although Orlando mayor Buddy Dyer has proposed a renovation of the current building.

"I know I can get the city to get that money together so we can get a new arena," O'Neal declared. "If I had an opportunity to put a group together and buy that team, I would buy that team. But if that's not the case, I will be a U.S. marshal, an FBI agent or an

ATF agent."

First of course, there's the matter of O'Neal's current career, which is progressing quite nicely in his new home in South Florida. Miami has trounced the competition in its own conference, going 26-4 against the East and 11-10 against the West, and its recent run of seven victories in eight games helped give the Heat a six-game lead over its closest pursuer in the conference.

"Sometimes we don't have the killer instinct that we should have, sometimes we're not as focused as we should be. But I think for a first-year team we're doing pretty good," O'Neal said.

Pacers' O'Neal criticizes media

Jermaine O'Neal of the Indiana Pacers had more to say about the Nov. 19 brawl in Detroit that led to his 25-game suspension, saying Ben Wallace hasn't taken enough blame for two things he did that night — shoving Ron Artest and then throwing a towel at him as he lay prone on the scorer's table.

Moments later, a fan threw a cup of beer at Artest and he stormed into the stands.

Artest was suspended by NBA Commissioner David Stern for the remainder of the season.

"Nobody threw a cup until he was throwing stuff at Ron," O'Neal told reporters. "But where was the blame on him? You guys [media] aren't going to blame Ben Wallace for doing anything because he's one of your guys. But Ron Artest, he's had a troubled background, so you're going to put it all on his shoulders."

The melee began shortly after Artest committed a hard foul against Wallace in the final minute of a game the Pacers were winning handily. Wallace responded with a shove, and the situation rapidly deteriorated.

O'Neal said there was a racial aspect to the coverage that he found discomforting.

"You take three athletes that are black, and compare it to," O'Neal said. "You had a hockey player that tried to murder his agent last year. Was that on TV for seven months? No, it wasn't."

"You had a baseball team that beat the hell out of two fans that were on the field. Beat the hell out of them. Was that talked about for a long time? No, it wasn't. You had a baseball player that broke some lady's nose because she was talking to him. Was that talked about? No. But all of sudden we're two 'hip-hopsters.'"

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Phil Mickelson prepares to putt on the eighth hole of the Poppy Hills Golf Course during Friday's second round of the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Mickelson shot a 5-under 67 Friday to reach the midway point of the tournament at 15-under 129, breaking the tournament's 36-hole scoring record by two strokes. Mickelson, who won in Phoenix last week, has a four-shot lead over Canadian Mike Weir.

AP



Running away

A week after romping in Phoenix, Mickelson pulling away at Pebble

The Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Despite two dozen victories on the PGA Tour and one memorable major, Phil Mickelson wound up in new territory through two rounds of the Pebble Beach Na-

Golf roundup

tional Pro-Am. This is the first time Lefty has had at least a share of the 36-hole lead in consecutive weeks.

And he has never led by this much.

"It's different. But I enjoy it," Mickelson said Friday afternoon after a 5-under 67 at Poppy Hills, which gave him another tournament record and, more importantly, a four-shot lead over Mike Weir.

After a course-record 62 in the opening round at Spyglass Hill, Mickelson threatened to turn the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am into a runaway with five birdies on his first nine holes to build a six-shot lead.

He was even par the rest of the way in light rain that fell over the Monterey Peninsula, but that was still good enough to finish at 15-under 129 and break the 36-hole tournament record by two shots.

Weir birdied the last three holes for a 67 at Pebble Beach, leaving him at 11-under 133. Andrew Magee had a 68 at Spyglass, while Kevin Sutherland (70) and Paul Goydos (68) were at Pebble Beach and wound up at 9-under 135.

Mickelson shot 60 in the second round last week in Phoenix, then closed with rounds of 66 and 68 for a five-shot victory, the largest margin of his career. In his last 11 rounds dating to the Bob Hope Classic, he is 53 under par.

Wilson leads in New Zealand

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — England's Oliver Wilson shot a 4-under 68 on Saturday for a one-stroke lead over countryman Miles Tunnickoff heading into the final round of the New Zealand Open.

Wilson, seeking his first European tour title, had a 17-under 199 total on the Gulf Harbour course. Tunnickoff shot 70 Saturday.

Sweden's Niclas Fasth, the second-round leader, shot a 75 to drop four strokes back.

Japan, Scotland share lead

GEORGE, South Africa — Catriona Matthew and Jason Moorie combined for a 4-under 69 playing alternate shot to help Scotland share the lead with Japan after the second round of the Women's World Cup on Saturday.

At 6-under 140, Scotland and Japan were a stroke ahead of Italy, which was atop the leaderboard with Canada after the first round. South Korea was two shots behind after Jeong Jang and Bo Bae Song carded a 5-under 68.

The American team of Meg Mallon and Beth Daniel was three back following a 74. They shared that spot with Laura Davies and Karen Stupples of England (74), and Karrie Webb and Rachel Hetherington of Australia (75).

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SPORTS



On All-Star weekend, both sides waiting for commissioner to cancel season, Page 27

Spring training 2005

Red Sox start over

Boston will open camp seeking first repeat since 1916

BY RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

The trophy has toured New England, the prized possession of the Boston Red Sox, who finally ended The Curse.

As spring training camps open next week from Vero Beach, Fla., to Peoria, Ariz., there are 29 teams ready to knock off the remarkable Red Sox.

"We have a slogan around here: 'Any group of schlemiels can win once,'" Red Sox President Larry Lucchino said. "We've got to win more than once."

A lot has happened since Keith Foulke flipped the famous ball to Doug Mientkiewicz for the final out at Busch Stadium last Oct. 27, giving the Red Sox their first World Series title since 1918. The fallout continues: The Red Sox and Mientkiewicz, traded this month to the New York Mets, still haven't figured out who owns that special sphere.

When Boston last defended the title, baseball sunk to a low. The White Sox won the AL pennant as the Red Sox dropped to sixth place, and Chicago then lost to Cincinnati 5-3 in the best-of-nine World Series. Afterward, eight White Sox players — the notorious Black Sox — were banned for life for throwing the Series at the behest of gamblers.

Baseball has different problems these days. Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield start spring training under unusual scrutiny, with the federal investigation of illegal steroid distribution still hanging over them.



The Boston Red Sox, who won their first World Series title in 86 years by coming back from a 3-0 deficit against the New York Yankees in the ALCS and then sweeping the St. Louis Cardinals in the Series, turned around and signed shortstop Edgar Renteria, above, away from the Cardinals. The Red Sox also added pitchers David Wells and Matt Clement as replacements for Pedro Martinez and Derek Lowe.



Washington Nationals shortstop Cristian Guzman puts on his new uniform during a news conference in Washington on Feb. 2. Though the deal to move the Montreal Expos was almost done in by city politics, Washington will field a major league team for the first time since the Senators became the Texas Rangers after the 1971 season.

Players and owners have agreed to more frequent testing for steroids and harsher penalties, but the deal still hasn't been put in writing.

"As a sport, we have done everything that we could at this point," Commissioner Bud Selig

said. "There are immediate penalties, random testing, a player gets publicly named if, heaven forbid, he does test positively."

That deal isn't the only new thing this spring. There's even a new team. After years of trying to move, the Montreal Expos fi-

nally did. After 36 years in Quebec as Les Expos, the team was reborn in December and christened the Washington Nationals, the first Major League Baseball team in the nation's capital since the expansion Senators became the Texas Rangers after the 1971 season.

"It'll be fun to go down to spring training and see all the new faces and put on the new uniforms and stuff," closer Chad Cordero said. Bought by the other 29 teams before the 2002 season, the franchise remains under control of the commissioner's office, and a sale to new owners is unlikely before Opening Day. That meant general manager Jim Bowden, who took over from Omar Minaya, didn't have much to spend.

Other teams lavished fortunes on free agents during the offseason, with Minaya making the biggest splash. Adding a Latin flair to New York's No. 2 team, he lured three-time Cy Young Award winner Pedro Martinez from Boston for \$53 million over four years, then signed Carlos Beltran to the biggest contract of the offseason, a \$119 million, seven-year deal that convinced the All-Star center fielder to leave the Houston Astros.

SEE START ON PAGE 26



Kings upset by officiating at end of second straight game

Page 30



Raich wins men's slalom in worlds; Miller crashes during second run

Page 27



Five birdies on front nine keep Mickelson in lead at Pebble

Page 31



Pedro Martinez was lured away from Boston by the New York Mets, who signed the three-time Cy Young Award winner him to a four-year, \$53 million deal.